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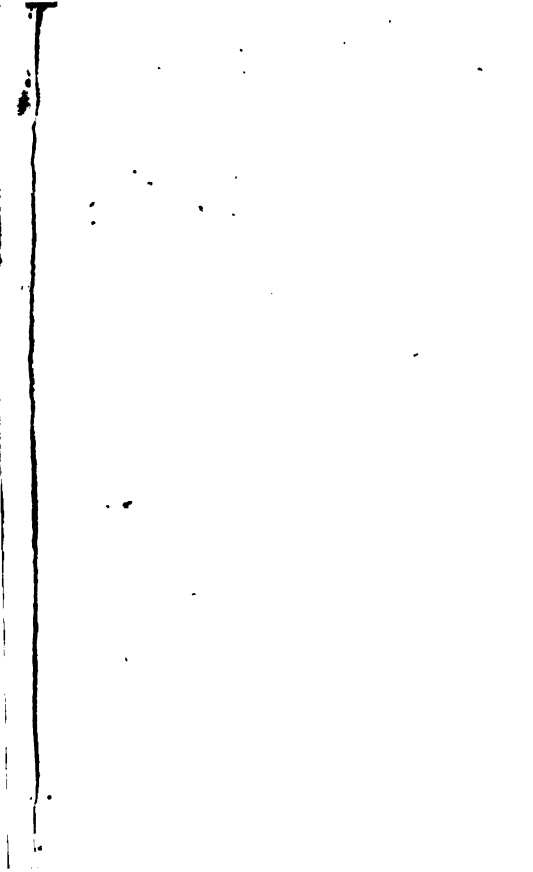
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THE
LONDON THEATRE.

A COLLECTION OF THE

Most celebrated Dramatic Pieces.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.



VOLUME XI.

LONDON:

**PRINTED FOR WHITTINGHAM AND ARLISS,
PATERNOSTER ROW.**

1815.

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TAMERLANE.

A Tragedy.

BY NICHOLAS ROWE, ESQ.

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THOMAS DIBDIN,

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Author of several Dramatic Pieces, &c.



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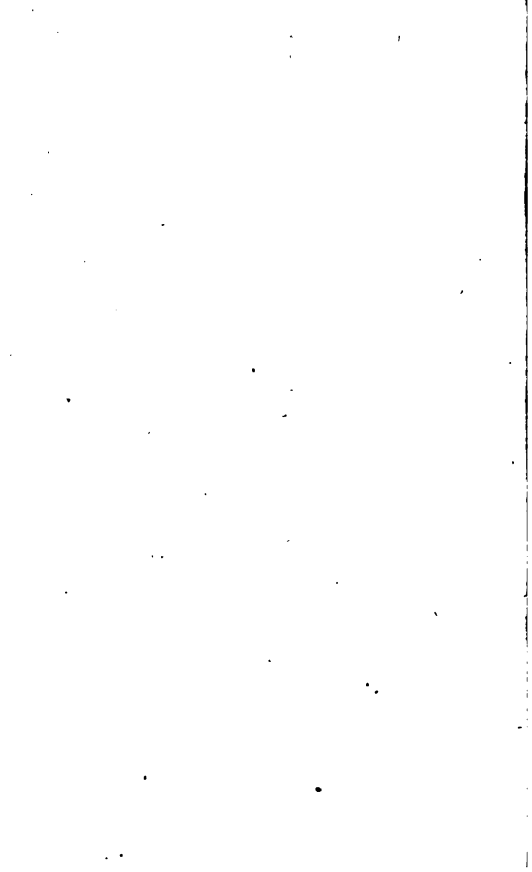
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TAMERLANE.

THIS tragedy was first acted at the theatre in Lincoln's-inn Fields in 1702, was received with great applause, and still continues to be a favourite. The character of *Tamerlane* is said to have been written to convey a compliment to King William III. from a supposed resemblance between the two heroes: and, in consequence, it was a custom to act the play both in London and Dublin on the 4th and 5th of November; the first being King William's birth-day, the latter the anniversary of his landing on the coast of England.

TAMERLANE was the second play written by Mr. Rowe; and he always used to speak of it as his most favourite production.



PROLOGUE.

Or all the Muse's various labours, none
Have lasted longer, or have higher flown,
Than those that tell the fame by ancient heroes won.
With pleasure, Rome, and great Augustus, heard
"Arms and the man" sung by the Mantuan bard.
In spite of time, the sacred story lives,
And Caesar and his empire still survives.
Like him (though much unequal to his flame)
Our author makes a pious prince his theme:
High with the foremost names in arms he stood,
Had fought and suffer'd for his country's good,
Yet sought not fame, but peace, in fields of blood.
Safe under him his happy people sat,
And griev'd at distance for their neighbours fate:
Whilst with success a Turkish monarch crown'd,
Like spreading flame, deform'd the nations round;
With sword and fire he forc'd his impious way
To lawless power, and universal sway.
Some abject states for fear the tyrant join,
Others for gold their liberties resign,
And venal princes sold their right divine:
Till heav'n, the growing evil to redress,
Sent Tamerlane to give the world a peace.
The hero, rous'd, asserts the glorious cause,
And to the field the cheerful soldier draws:
Around in crowds his valiant leaders wait,
Anxious for glory, and secure of fate;
Well pleas'd, once more to venture on his side,
And prove that faith again, which had so oft been try'd.
The peaceful fathers, who in senate meet,
Approve an enterprize so just, so great;
While with their prince's arms, their voice thus join'd,
Gains half the praise of having sav'd mankind.
Ev'n in a circle, where, like this, the fair
Were met, the bright assembly did declare,
Their house, with one consent, were for the war;
Each urg'd her lover to unsheath his sword,
And never spare a man who broke his word.
Thus fir'd, the brave on to the danger press;
Their arms were crown'd abroad with just success,
And blest at home with beauty and with peace.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted in Lincoln's-inn Fields.

<i>Tamerlane</i>	Mr. Betterton.
<i>Moneses</i>	Mr. Powell.
<i>Axalla</i>	Mr. Booth.
<i>Omar</i>	Mr. Freeman.
<i>Stratocles</i>	Mr. Pack.
<i>Prince of Tanais</i>	Mr. Fieldhouse.
<i>Mirvan</i>	Mr. Cory.
<i>Zama</i>	Mr. Husbands.
<i>Bajazet</i>	Mr. Verbruggen.
<i>Holy</i>	Mr. Baily.
<i>Dervise</i>	Mr. Arnold.
 <i>Selima</i>	 Mrs. Barry.
<i>Arpasia</i>	Mrs. Bracegirdle.

Drury Lane, 1615.

Covent Garden, 1696.

<i>Tamerlane</i>	Mr. Pope.	Mr. H. Siddons.
<i>Moneses</i>	Mr. Rae.	Mr. H. Johnstone.
<i>Axalla</i>	Mr. Wallaok.	Mr. Brunton.
<i>Omar</i>	Mr. R. Phillips.	Mr. Cory.
<i>Stratocles</i>	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Prince of Tanais</i>	Mr. Coveuey.	Mr. Beverly.
<i>Mirvan</i>	Mr. Ebsworth.	Mr. Williams.
<i>Zama</i>	Mr. Cooke.	Mr. Curties.
<i>Bajazet</i>	Mr. Kean.	Mr. Cooke.
<i>Haly</i>	Mr. Kent.	Mr. Atkins.
<i>Dervise</i>	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Chapman.
 <i>Selima</i>	 Miss L. Kelly.	 Mrs. H. Siddons.
<i>Arpasia</i>	Mrs. Bartley.	Mrs. Litchfield.

Guards, Mutes, and Attendants.

SCENE—*The Camps of TAMERLANE, near Angoria
in Galatia.*

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. *Before TAMERLANE's Tent.*

The PRINCE of TANAI'S, ZAMA, and MIRVAN, discovered.

Prince. **H**AIL to the sun! from whose returning light
The cheerful soldier's arms new lustre take,
To deck the pomp of battle. Oh, my friends!
Was ever such a glorious face of war?
See, from this height, how all Galatia's plains
With nations numberless are cover'd o'er;
Who, like a deluge, hide the face of earth,
And leave no object in the vast horizon,
But glitt'ring arms and skies.

Zama. Our Asian world
From this important day expects a lord;
This day they hope an end of all their woes,
Of tyranny, of bondage, and oppression,
From our victorious emp'ror, Tamerlane.

Mir. Hear you of Bajazet?

Prince. Late in the evening
A slave of near attendance on his person

'Scap'd to our camp. From him we learn'd, the tyrant,
 With rage redoubled, for the fight prepares;
 Some accidental passion fires his breast
 (Love, as 'tis thought, for a fair Grecian captive),
 And adds new horror to his native fury.
 But see his fate! The mighty Tamerlane
 Comes, like the proxy of inquiring heav'n,
 To judge, and to redress. *[Flourish of Trumpets.*

Enter TAMERLANE.

Tam. Yet, yet a little, and destructive slaughter
 Shall rage around, and mar this beauteous prospect.
 Pass but an hour, which stands betwixt the lives
 Of thousands and eternity, what change
 Shall hasty death make in yon glitt'ring plain?
 Oh, thou fell monster, war! that in a moment
 Lay'st waste the noblest part of the creation,
 The boast and masterpiece of the great maker,
 That wears in vain th' impression of his image,
 Unprivileg'd from thee,
 Health to our friends, and to our arms success!

[To the Prince, Zama, and Mirvan,
 Such as the cause for which we fight deserves.

Prince. Nor can we ask beyond what heaven bestows,
 Preventing still our wishes. See, great air,
 The universal joy your soldiers wear,
 Omen of prosp'rous battle.
 Impatient of the tedious night, in arms
 Watchful they stood, expecting op'ning day;
 And now are hardly by their leaders held
 From darting on the foe.

Tam. Yes, prince, I mean to give a loose to war.
 This morn Axalla, with my Parthian horse,
 Arrives to join me. He who, like a storm,
 Swept with his flying squadrons all the plain
 Between Angoria's walls and yon tall mountains,
 That seem to reach the clouds; and now he comes,
 Loaden with spoils and conquest, to my aid.

[Flourish of Trumpets,
Zama. These trumpets speak his presence.

Enter AXALLA, who kneels to TAMERLANE.

Tam. Welcome! thou worthy partner of my laurels,
Thou brother of my choice, a band more sacred
Than nature's brittle tie. By holy friendship,
Glory and fame stood still for thy arrival;
My soul seem'd wanting in its better half,
And languish'd for thy absence.

Axal. My emperor! My ever royal master!
To whom my secret soul more lowly bends,
Than forms of outward worship can express;
How poorly does your soldier pay this goodness,
Who wears his every hour of life out for you!
Yet 'tis his all, and what he has he offers;
Nor now disdain t' accept the gift he brings,

*Enter SELIMA, MONESES, STRATOCLES, Prisoners;
Guard, Mutes, &c.*

This earnest of your fortune. See, my lord,
The noblest prize that ever grac'd my arms!
Approach, my fair——

Tam. This is indeed to conquer,
And well to be rewarded for thy conquest;
The bloom of op'ning flow'rs, unsullied beauty,
Softness, and sweetest innocence she wears,
And looks like nature in the world's first spring.
But say, Axalla——

Sel. Most renown'd in war, [*Kneeling to Tam.*]
Look with compassion on a captive maid,
Though born of hostile blood; nor let my birth,
Deriv'd from Bajazet, prevent that mercy
Which every subject of your fortune finds.
War is the province of ambitious man,
Who tears the miserable world for empire;
Whilst our weak sex, incapable of wrong,
On either side claims privilege of safety.

Tam. [*Raising her*] Rise, royal maid! the pride of
haughty pow'r
Pays homage, not receives it, from the fair.
Thy angry father fiercely calls me forth,
And urges me unwillingly to arms.
Yet though our frowning battles menace death

And mortal conflict, think not that we hold
 Thy innocence and virtue as our foe.
 Here, till the fate of Asia is decided,
 In safety stay. To-morrow is your own.
 Nor grieve for who may conquer, or who lose;
 Fortune on either side shall wait thy wishes.

Sel. Where shall my wonder and my praise begin?
 From the successful labours of thy arms;
 Or from a theme more soft and full of peace,
 Thy mercy and thy gentleness? Oh, Tamerlane!
 What can I pay thee for this noble usage,
 But grateful praise? So heav'n itself is paid.
 Give peace, ye pow'rs above, peace to mankind;
 Nor let my father wage unequal war
 Against the force of such united virtues.

Tam. Heav'n hear thy pious wish!—But since our
 prospect
 Looks darkly on futurity, till fate
 Determine for us, let thy beauty's safety
 Be my Axalla's care; in whose glad eyes
 I read what joy the pleasing service gives him.
 Is there amongst thy other pris'ners aught
 Worthy our knowledge? [To Axalla.

Axal. That brave man, my lord, [Points to Moneses.
 With long resistance held the combat doubtful.
 His party, press'd with numbers, soon grew faint,
 And would have left their charge an easy prey;
 Whilst he alone, undaunted at the odds,
 Though hopeless to escape, fought well and firmly;
 Nor yielded till, o'ermatch'd by many hands,
 He seem'd to shame our conquest, while he own'd it.

Tam. Thou speak'st him as a soldier should a soldier,
 Just to the worth he finds. I would not war [To Mon.
 With aught that wears thy virtuous stamp of greatness.
 Thy habit speaks thee Christian; nay, yet more,
 My soul seems pleas'd to take acquaintance with thee,
 As if ally'd to thine: perhaps 'tis sympathy
 Of honest minds; like strings wound up in music,
 Where, by one touch, both utter the same harmony.
 Why art thou then a friend to Bajazet?
 And why my enemy?

Mon. If human wisdom
Could point out ev'ry action of our lives,
And say, "Let it be thus, in spite of fate
Or partial fortune," then I had not been
The wretch I am.

Tam. The brave meet ev'ry accident
With equal minds. Think nobler of thy foes,
Than to account thy chance in war an evil.

Mon. Far, far from that: I rather hold it grievous
That I was forb'd ev'n but to seem your enemy;
Nor think the baseness of a vanquish'd slave
Moves me to flatter for precarious life,
Or ill-bought freedom, when I swear by heav'n,
Were I to choose from all mankind a master,
It should be Tamerlane.

Tam. A noble freedom
Dwells with the brave, unknown to fawning sycophants,
And claims a privilege of being believ'd.
I take thy praise as earnest of thy friendship.

Mon. Still you prevent the homage I should offer.
Oh, royal sir! let my misfortunes plead,
And wipe away the hostile mark I wore.
I was, when not long since my fortune hail'd me,
Bless'd to my wish; I was the prince Moneses,
Born and bred up to greatness: witness the blood,
Which, through successive heroes' veins, ally'd
To our Greek emperors, roll'd down to me,
Feeds the bright flame of glory in my heart.

Tam. Ev'n that, that princely tie, should bind thee
If virtue were not more than all alliance. [to me,

Mon. I have a sister, (oh, severe remembrance!)
Our noble house's, nay, her sex's pride;
Nor think my tongue too lavish, if I speak her
Fair as the fame of virtue, and yet chaste
As its cold precepts; wise beyond her sex
And blooming youth; soft as forgiving mercy,
Yet greatly brave and jealous for her honour:
Such as she was, to say I barely lov'd her,
Is poor to my soul's meaning. From our infancy
There grew a mutual tenderness between us,

Till not long since her vows were kindly plighted
To a young lord, the equal of her birth.

The happy day was fix'd, and now approaching,
When faithless Bajazet (upon whose honour,
In solemn treaty giv'n, the Greeks depended)
With sudden war broke in upon the country,
Secure of peace, and for defence unready.

Tam. Let majesty no more be held divine,
Since kings, who are call'd gods, profane themselves.

Mon. Among the wretches, whom that deluge swept
Away to slavery, myself and sister,
Then passing near the frontiers to the court
(Which waited for her nuptials), were surpris'd,
And made the captives of the tyrant's pow'r.
Soon as we reach'd his court, we found our usage,
Beyond what we expected, fair and noble;
'Twas then the storm of your victorious arms
Look'd black, and seem'd to threaten, when he press'd
(By oft repeating instances) to draw [me

My sword for him: but when he found my soul
Disdain'd his purpose, he more fiercely told me,
That my Arpasia, my lov'd sister's fate,
Depended on my courage shown for him.
I had long learn'd to hold myself at nothing;
But for her sake, to ward the blow from her,
I bound my service to the man I hated.

Six days are pass'd since, by the sultan's order,
I left the pledge of my return behind,
And went to guard this princess to his camp:
The rest the brave Axalla's fortune tells you.

Tam. Wisely the tyrant strove to prop his cause,
By leagu'ing with thy virtue; but just heav'n
Has torn thee from his side, and left him naked
To the avenging bolt that drives upon him.
Forget the name of captive, [*Gives him his Sword*] and
I wish

I could as well restore that fair one's freedom,
Whose loss hangs heavy on thee: yet, ere night,
Perhaps, we may deserve thy friendship nobler;
Th' approaching storm may cast thy shipwreck'd wealth

Back to thy arms: till that be past, since war
(Though in the justest cause) is ever doubtful,
I will not ask thy sword to aid my victory,
Lest it should hurt that hostage of thy valour
Our common foe detains.

Mon. Let Bajazet
Bend to his yoke repining slaves by force;
You, sir, have found a nobler way to empire,
Lord of the willing world.

Tam. Haste, my Axalla, to dispose with safety
The beauteous charge, and on the foe revenge
The pain which absence gives; thy other care,
Honour and arms, now summon thy attendance.
Now do thy office well, my soul! Remember
Thy cause, the cause of heav'n and injur'd earth:
Oh, thou Supreme! if thy great spirit warms
My glowing breast, and fires my soul to arms;
Grant that my sword, assisted by thy pow'r,
This day may peace and happiness restore,
That war and lawless rage may vex the world no more. }
[Flourish of Trumpets: Excunt.] }

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I. TAMERLANE'S Camp.

Enter MONESES.

Mon. The dreadful business of the war is o'er;
And slaughter, that from yester morn till ev'n,
With giant steps, pass'd striding o'er the field,
Besmear'd and horrid with the blood of nations,
Now weary sits among the mangled heaps,
And slumbers o'er her prey; while from this camp
The cheerful sounds of victory and Tamerlane
Beat the high arch of heav'n.

Enter STRATOCLES.

My Stratocles!
Most happily return'd; might I believe
Thou bring'st me any joy?

Stra. With my best diligence,
This night, I have inquir'd of what concerns you.
Scarce was the sun, who shone upon the horror
Of the past day, sunk to the western ocean,

When, by permission from the prince Axalla,
I mix'd among the tumult of the warriors
Returning from the battle : here a troop
Of hardy Parthians, red with honest wounds,
Confess'd the conquest they had well deserv'd :
There a dejected crew of wretched captives
Follow'd sadly after

The haughty victor's heels. But that which fully
Crown'd the success of Tamerlane, was Bajazet,
Fall'n, like the proud archangel, from the height
Where once (ev'n next to majesty divine)
Enthron'd he sat, down to the vile descent
And lowness of a slave : but, oh ! to speak
The rage, the fierceness, and the indignation,
It bars all words, and cuts description short.

Mon. Then he is fall'n ! that comet, which on high
Portended ruin ; he has spent his blaze,
And shall distract the world with fears no more.
But say, my friend, what hear'st thou of Arpasia ?
For there my thoughts, my ev'ry care is center'd.

Stra. Though on that purpose still I bent my search,
Yet nothing certain could I gain, but this :
That in the pillage of the sultan's tent
Some women were made pris'ners, who this morning
Were to be offer'd to the emp'ror's view.
Their names and qualities, though oft inquiring,
I could not learn.

Mon. Then must my soul still labour
Beneath uncertainty and anxious doubt.

Stra. 'Twas said, not far from hence
The captives were to wait the emp'ror's passage.

Mon. Haste we to find the place. Oh, my Arpasia !
Shall we then meet ?

When thy lov'd sight shall bless my eyes again, }
Then I will own I ought not to complain, }
Since that sweet hour is worth whole years of pain. }
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The Inside of a magnificent Tent.*

Flourish. TAMERLANE, AXALLA, PRINCE of TANAIIS, ZAMA, MIRVAN, *Soldiers, and Attendants, discovered.*

Axal. From this auspicious day the Parthian name
Shall date its birth of empire, and extend;
Ev'n from the dawning east to utmost Thule,
The limits of its sway.

Prince. Nations unknown,
Where yet the Roman eagles never flew,
Shall pay their homage to victorious Tamerlane;
Bend to his valour and superior virtue,
And own that conquest is not giv'n by chance,
But, bound by fatal and resistless merit,
Waits on his arms.

Tam. It is too much: you dress me,
Like an usurper, in the borrow'd attributes
Of injur'd heav'n. Can we call conquest ours?
Shall man, this pigmy, with a giant's pride,
Vaunt of himself, and say, "Thus have I done this?"
Oh, vain pretence to greatness! Like the moon,
We borrow all the brightness which we boast;
Dark in ourselves and useless. If that hand
That rules the fate of battles, strike for us,
Crown us with fame, and gild our clay with honour,
'Twere most ungrateful to disown the benefit,
And arrogate a praise which is not ours.

Axal. With such unshaken temper of the soul
To bear the swelling tide of prosp'rous fortune,
Is to deserve that fortune: in adversity,
The mind grows tough by buffeting the tempest,
Which, in success dissolving, sinks to ease,
And loses all her firmness.

Tam. Oh, Axalla!
Could I forget I am a man, as thou art,
Would not the winter's cold, or summer's heat,
Sickness, or thirst and hunger, all the train
Of nature's clam'rous appetites, asserting
An equal right in kings and common men,

Reprove me daily?—No—if I boast of aught,
Be it to have been heav'n's happy instrument,
The means of good to all my fellow creatures:
This is a king's best praise.

Enter OMAR.

Omar. Honour and fame [*Bows to Tamerlane.*
For ever wait the emp'ror! May our prophet
Give him ten thousand thousand days of life,
And ev'ry day like this! The captive sultan,
Fierce in his bonds, and at his fate repining,
Attends your sacred will.

Tam. Let him approach.

Flourish of Trumpets. Enter BAJAZET, Guards, and Soldiers.

When I survey the ruins of this field,
The wild destruction which thy fierce ambition
Has dealt among mankind (so many widows
And helpless orphans has thy battle made,
That half our eastern world this day are mourners),
Well may I, in behalf of heav'n and earth,
Demand from thee atonement for this wrong.

Baj. Make thy demand to those that own thy pow'r;
Know I am still beyond it; and though fortune
(Curse on that changeling deity of fools!)
Has stripp'd me of the train and pomp of greatness,
That outside of a king, yet still my soul,
Fix'd high, and of itself alone dependent,
Is ever free and royal, and ev'n now,
As at the head of battle, does defy thee.
I know what pow'r the chance of war has giv'n,
And dare thee to the use on't. This vile speeching,
This after-game of words, is what most irks me;
Spare that, and for the rest 'tis equal all—
Be it as it may.

Tam. Well was it for the world,
When on their borders neighbouring princes met,
Frequent in friendly parle, by cool debates
Preventing wasteful war; such should our meeting

I would have taught thy neck to know my weight,
And mounted from that footstool to my saddle :
Then, when thy daily servile task was done,
I would have cag'd thee, for the scorn of slaves,
Till thou hadst begg'd to die ; and ev'n that meroy
I had deny'd thee. Now thou know'st my mind.
And question me no further.

Tam. Well dost thou teach me
What justice should exact from thee. Mankind,
With one consent, cry out for vengeance on thee ;
Loudly they call to cut off this league-breaker,
This wild destroyer from the face of earth.

Baj. Do it, and rid thy shaking soul at once
Of its worst fear.

Tam. Why slept the thunder
That should have arm'd the idol deity,
And giv'n thee pow'r, ere yester sun was set,
To shake the soul of Tamerlane. Hadst thou an arm
To make thee fear'd, thou shouldst have prov'd it on
me,

Amidst the sweat and blood of yonder field,
When through the tumult of the war I sought thee,
Fenc'd in with nations.

Baj. Curse upon the stars,
That fated us to diff'rent scenes of slaughter !
Oh ! could my sword have met thee——

Tam. Thou hadst then,
As now, been in my pow'r, and held thy life
Dependent on my gift.—Yes, Bajazet,
I bid thee live ; *[They take of Bajazet's Chains.*
Nay more, couldst thou forget thy brutal fierceness,
And form thyself to manhood, I would bid thee
Live, and be still a king, that thou may'st learn
What man should be to man, in war rememb'ring
The common tie and brotherhood of kind.
This royal tent, with such of thy domestics
As can be found, shall wait upon thy service ;
Nor will I use my fortune to demand
Hard terms of peace, but such as thou may'st offer
With honour, I with honour may receive.

Baj. Ha! say'st thou—no—our prophet's vengeance
blast me,

If thou shalt buy my friendship with thy empire.
Damnation on thee! thou smooth fawning talker!
Give me again my chains, that I may curse thee,
And gratify my rage: or, if thou wilt
Be a vain fool, and play with thy perdition,
Remember I'm thy foe, and hate thee deadly.
Thy folly on thy head!

Tam. Be still my foe.

Great minds, like heav'n, are pleas'd in doing good,
Though the ungrateful subjects of their favours
Are barren in return. Virtue still does
With scorn the mercenary world regard,
Where abject souls do good, and hope reward:
Above the worthless trophies men can raise,
She seeks not honours, wealth, nor airy praise,
But with herself, herself the goddess pays. }

[*Flourish. Exeunt Tamerlane, Aralla, Prince, Mirvan, Zama, and Attendants.*]

Baj. Come, lead me to my dungeon; plunge me down
Deep from the bated sight of man and day;
Where, under covert of the friendly darkness,
My soul may brood at leisure o'er its anguish.

Omar. Our royal master would with noble usage,
Make your misfortunes light: he bids you hope——

Baj. I tell thee, slave, I have shook hands with hope,
And all my thoughts are rage, despair, and horror.

[*Exit Omar and Guards.*]

Ha! wherefore am I thus!—Perdition seize me!
But my cold blood runs shiv'ring to my heart,
The rage and fiercer passions of my breast
Are lost in new confusion.
Arpasia!

Enter ARPASIA.

Haly!

Enter HALY.

Haly. Oh, emperor! for whose hard fate our prophet
And all the heroes of thy sacred race

Are sad in paradise, thy faithful Haly,
The slave of all thy pleasures, in this ruin,
This universal shipwreck of thy fortunes,
Has gather'd up this treasure for thy arms :
Nor ev'n the victor, haughty Tamerlane
(By whose command once more thy slave beholds thee),
Denies this blessing to thee, but with honour
Renders thee back thy queen, thy beauteous bride.

Baj. Oh! had her eyes with pity seen my sorrows,
Had she the fondness of a tender bride,
Heav'n could not have bestow'd a greater blessing,
And love had made amends for loss of empire.
But see, what fury dwells upon her charms!
What lightning flashes from her angry eyes!
With a malignant joy she views my ruin :
Even beauteous in her hatred, still she charms me,
And awes my fierce tumultuous soul to love.

Arp. And dar'st thou hope, thou tyrant ravisher!
That heav'n has any joy in store for thee?
Look back upon the sum of thy past life,
Where tyranny, oppression, and injustice,
Perjury, murders, swell the black account ;
Where lost Arpasia's wrongs stand bleeding fresh,
Thy last recorded crime. But heav'n has found thee ;
At length the tardy vengeance has o'erta'en thee.
My weary soul shall bear a little longer
The pain of life, to call for justice on thee :
That once complete, sink to the peaceful grave,
And lose the memory of my wrongs and thee.

Baj. Thou rail'st! I thank thee for it—be perverse,
And muster all the woman in thy soul ;
Goad me with curses, be a very wife,
That I may fling off this tame love and hate thee.

[*Bajazet starts.*]

Enter MONESES.

Ha! keep thy temper, heart; nor take alarm
At a slave's presence.

Mon. It is Arpasia!—Leave me, thou cold fear.
Sweet as the rosy morn she breaks upon me ;

And sorrow, like the night's unwholesome shade;
Gives way before the golden dawn she brings.

Bay. [*Advancing towards him*] Ha, Christian! Is it
well that we meet thus?

Is this thy faith?

Mon. Why does thy frowning brow
Put on this storm of fury? Is it strange
We should meet here, companions in misfortune,
The captives of one common chance of war?
Nor shouldst thou wonder that my sword has fail'd
Before the fortune of victorious Tamerlane,
When thou, with nations like the sanded shore,
With half the warring world upon thy side,
Couldst not stand up against this dreadful battle,
That crush'd thee with its shock. Thy men can witness,
Those cowards that forsook me in the combat,
My sword was not inactive.

Bay. No——'Tis false:

Where is my daughter, thou vile Greek? Thou hast
Betray'd her to the Tartar; or even worse,
Pale with thy fear, didst lose her like a coward;
And, like a coward now, wouldst cast the blame
On fortune and ill stars.

Mon. Ha! saidst thou, like a coward?
What sanctity, what majesty divine
Hast thou put on, to guard thee from my rage,
That thus thou dar'st to wrong me?

Bay. Out, thou slave,
And know me for thy lord——

Mon. I tell thee, tyrant,
When in the pride of power thou sat'st on high,
When like an idol thou wert vainly worship'd
By prostrate wretches, born with slavish souls;
Ev'n when thou wert a king, thou wert no more
Nor greater than Moneses, born of a race
Royal and great as thine. What art thou now then?
The fate of war has set thee with the lowest;
And captives (like the subjects of the grave),
Losing distinction, serve one common lord.

Bay. Brav'd by this dog! Now give a loose to rage,

And curse thyself; curse thy false cheating prophet.
Ha! yet there's some revenge. Hear me, thou Christian!
Thou left'st that sister with me: Thou impostor!
Thou boaster of thy honesty! Thou liar!
But take her to thee back.

Now to explore my prison—if it holds
Another plague like this. The restless damn'd
(If mufties lie not) wander thus in hell;
From scorching flames to chilling frosts they run,
Then from their frosts to fires return again,
And only prove variety of pain.

[Exeunt Bajazet and Haly.]

Arp. Stay, Bajazet, I charge thee, by my wrongs,
Stay and unfold a tale of so much horror,
As only fits thy telling.—Oh, Moneses!

Mon. Why dost thou weep? Why this tempestuous
passion,
That stops thy fault'ring tongue short on my name?
Oh, speak! unveil this mystery of sorrow.

Arp. Thou art undone, lost, ruin'd, and undone!

Mon. I will not think 'tis so, while I have thee;
While thus 'tis given to fold thee in my arms;
The sad remembrance of past woes is lost.

Arp. Forbear to sooth thy soul with flatt'ring thoughts
Of evils overpast, and joys to come:
Our woes are like the genuine shade beneath,
Where fate cuts off the very hopes of day,
And everlasting night and horror reign.

Mon. By all the tenderness and chaste endearments
Of our past love, I charge thee, my Arpasia,
To ease my soul of doubts! Give me to know,
At once, the utmost malice of my fate!

Arp. Take then thy wretched share in all I suffer,
Still partner of my heart! Scarce hadst thou left
The sultan's camp, when the imperious tyrant,
Soft'ning the pride and fierceness of his temper,
With gentle speech made offer of his love.
Amaz'd, as at the shock of sudden death,
I started into tears, and often urg'd
(Though still in vain) the difference of our faiths.

At last, as flying to the utmost refuge,
With lifted hands and streaming eyes, I own'd
The fraud, which when we first were made his pris'ners,
I forc'd thee to put on ;
Thy borrow'd name of brother, mine of sister ;
Hiding between that veil the nearer tie
Our mutual vows had made before the priest.
Kindling to rage at hearing of my story,
Then, be it so, he cry'd : Think'st thou thy vows,
Giv'n to a slave, shall bar me from thy beauties ?
Then bade the priest pronounce the marriage rites :
Which he perform'd ; whilst, shrieking with despair,
I call'd in vain the pow'rs of heav'n to aid me.

Mon. Villain ! Imperial villain !—Oh, the coward !
Aw'd by his guilt, though back'd by force and power,
He durst not to my face avow his purpose :
But in my absence, like a lurking thief,
Stole on my treasure, and at once undid me.
Oh ! I cannot bear it.

Thou lovely hoard of sweets, where all my joys
Were treasur'd up, to have thee rifled thus !
But I will have thee from him. Tamerlane
(The sovereign judge of equity on earth)
Shall do me justice on this mighty robber,
And render back thy beauties to Moneses.

Arp. And who shall render back my peace, my honour ?
I am the tyrant's wife. Oh, fatal title !
And, in the sight of all the saints, have sworn,
By honour, womanhood, and blushing shame,
To know no second bride-bed but my grave.

Mon. Tell me, Arpasia—say, what joys are those
That wait to crown the wretch who suffers here ?
Oh ! tell me, and sustain my failing faith.

Arp. Imagine, 'tis a tract of endless joys, which
fancy cannot paint
Without satiety or interruption ;
Imagine, 'tis to meet and part no more.
Oh, my Moneses ! now the surges rise,
The swelling sea breaks in between our barks,

And drives us to our fate on different rocks.
Farewell!—My soul lives with thee.

Mon. Death is parting,
'Tis the last sad adieu 'twixt soul and body.
But this is somewhat worse—My joy, my comfort,
All that was left in life, fleets after thee;
My aching sight hangs on thy parting beauties,
Thy lovely eyes, all drown'd in floods of sorrow.
So sinks the setting sun beneath the waves,
And leaves the traveller in pathless woods,
Benighted and forlorn.—Thus, with sad eyes,
Westward he turns, to mark the light's decay,
Till, having lost the last faint glimpse of day,
Cheerless, in darkness, he pursues his way.

[Exeunt Moneses and Arpasia severally.]

ACT THE THIRD.



SCENE I. *The Interior of the Royal Tent.*

Enter AXALLA and SELIMA.

Axal. Why was I ever blest?—Why is remembrance
Rich with a thousand pleasing images
Of past enjoyments, since 'tis but to plague me?
When thou art mine no more, what will it ease me
To think of all the golden minutes past,
To think that thou wert kind, and I was happy;
But, like an angel fall'n from bliss, to curse
My present state, and mourn the heav'n I've lost?

Sel. Hope better for us both; nor let thy fears,
Like an unlucky omen, cross my way.
My father, rough and stormy in his nature,
To me was always gentle, and, with fondness
Paternal ever met me with a blessing.
Oft, when offence had stirr'd him to such fury,
That not grave counsellors for wisdom fam'd,
Nor hardy captains that had fought his battles,

Presum'd to speak, but struck with awful dread
Were hush'd as death; yet has he smil'd on me,
Kiss'd me, and bade me utter all my purpose,
Till with my idle prattle I had sooth'd him,
And won him from his anger.

Axal. Oh! I know

Thou hast a tongue to charm the wildest tempers.
But, oh! when I revolve each circumstance,
My Christian faith, my service closely bound
To Tamerlane, my master and my friend,
Tell me, my charmer, if my fears are vain?
Think what remains for me, if the fierce sultan
Should doom thy beauties to another's bed!

Sel. 'Tis a sad thought; but to appease thy doubts,
Here, in the awful sight of heav'n, I vow
No power shall e'er divide me from thy love,
Ev'n duty shall not force me to be false.
My cruel stars may tear thee from my arms,
But never from my heart.

Axal. But see, the sultan comes!

Enter BAJAZET.

Baj. To have a nauseous courtesy forc'd on me,
Spite of my will, by an insulting foe!
Ha! they would break the fierceness of my temper,
And make me supple for their slavish purpose.
Curse on their fawning arts! From heav'n itself
I would not, on such terms receive a benefit,
But spurn it back upon the giver's hand.

Sel. My lord! my royal father!

[Comes forward, and kneels to Bajazet.]

Baj. Ha! what art thou?

What heavenly innocence! that in a form
So known, so lov'd, hast left thy paradise,
For joyless prison, for this place of woe!
Art thou my Selima?

Sel. Have you forgot me?

Alas, my piety is then in vain!
Your Selima, your daughter whom you lov'd,
The fondling once of her dear father's arms,

Is come to claim her share in his misfortunes;
To help to wear the tedious minutes out,
To soften bondage, and the loss of empire.

Baj. Now, by our prophet, if my wounded mind
Could know a thought of peace, it would be now :
Ev'n from thy prating infancy thou wert
My joy, my little angel : smiling comfort
Came with thee still to glad me. Now I'm curs'd
Ev'n in thee too. Reproach and infamy
Attend the Christian dog t' whom thou wert trusted.
To see thee here—'twere better see thee dead !

Axal. Thus, Tamerlane, to royal Bajazet,
With kingly greeting, sends : since with the brave
(The bloody bus'ness of the fight once ended)
Stern hate and opposition ought to cease ;
Thy queen already to thy arms restor'd,
Receive this second gift, thy beauteous daughter ;
And if there be aught further in thy wish,
Demand with honour, and obtain it freely.

Baj. Bear back the fulsome greeting to thy master ;
Tell him, I'll none on't. Had he been a god,
All his omnipotence could not restore
My fame diminished, loss of sacred honour,
The radiancy of majesty eclips'd :
For aught besides, it is not worth my care ;
The giver and his gifts are both beneath me.

Axal. Enough of war the wounded earth has known ;
Weary at length, and wasted with destruction,
Sadly she rears her ruin'd head, to show
Her cities humbled, and her countries spoil'd.
Oh, sultan ! by the pow'r divine I swear,
With joy I would resign the savage trophies,
In blood and battle gain'd, could I atone
The fatal breach 'twixt thee and Tamerlane ;
And think a soldier's glory well bestow'd
To buy mankind a peace.

Baj. And what art thou,
That dost presume to meditate 'twixt the rage
Of angry kings ?

Axal. A prince, born of the noblest,

And of a soul that answers to that birth,
That dares not but do well. Thou dost put on
A forc'd forgetfulness, thus not to know me,
A guest so lately to thy court, then meeting
On gentler terms.—

Sel. Could aught efface the merit
Of brave Axalla's name, yet when your daughter
Shall tell how well, how nobly she was us'd,
How light this gallant prince made all her bondage,
Most sure the royal Bajazet will own
That honour stands indebted to such goodness,
Nor can a monarch's friendship more than pay it.

Baj. Ha! know'st thou that, fond girl?—Go—'tis not
well;

And when thou couldst descend to take a benefit
From a vile Christian, and thy father's foe,
Thou didst an act dishonest to thy race:
Henceforth, unless thou mean'st to cancel all
My share in thee, and write thyself a bastard,
Die, starve, know any evil, any pain,
Rather than taste a mercy from these dogs.

Sel. Alas, Axalla!

Axal. Weep not, lovely maid!

I swear, one pearly drop from those fair eyes
Would over-pay the service of my life!
One sigh from thee has made a large amends
For all thy angry father's frowns and fierceness.

Baj. Oh, my curs'd fortune!—Am I fall'n thus low!
Dishonour'd to my face! Thou earth-born thing!
Thou clod! how hast thou dar'd to lift thy eyes
Up to the sacred race of mighty Ottoman,
Whom kings, whom e'en our prophet's holy offspring,
At distance have beheld? And what art thou?
What glorious titles blazon out thy birth?
Thou vile obscurity! ha!—say—thou base one.

Axal. Thus challeng'd, virtue, modest as she is,
Stands up to do herself a common justice;
To answer, and assert that in-born merit,
That worth, which conscious to herself she feels.
Were honour to be scann'd by long descent.

From ancestors illustrious, I could vaunt
A lineage of the greatest,
Heroes and god-like patriots, who subdu'd
The world by arms and virtue, and, being Romans,
Scorn'd to be kings; but that be their own praise:
Nor will I borrow merit from the dead,
Myself an undeserver. I could prove
My friendship such as thou might'st deign t' accept
With honour, when it comes with friendly office,
To render back thy crown and former greatness.
And yet e'en this, e'en all is poor, when Selima,
With matchless worth, weighs down the adverse scale.

Baj. To give me back what yesterday took from me,
Would be to give like heaven, when, having finish'd
This world (the goodly work of his creation),
He bid his favourite man be lord of all.
But this——

Axal. Nor is this gift beyond my pow'r.
Oft has the mighty master of my arms
Urg'd me, with large ambition, to demand
Crowns and dominions from his bounteous pow'r:
'Tis true, I wav'd the proffer, and have held it
The worthier choice to wait upon his virtues,
To be the friend and partner of his wars,
Than to be Asia's lord. Nor wonder then,
If in the confidence of such a friendship,
I promise boldly, for the royal giver,
Thy crown and empire.

Baj. For our daughter thus
Mean'st thou to barter? Ha! I tell thee, Christian,
There is but one, one dowry thou canst give,
And I can ask, worthy my daughter's love.

Axal. Oh! name the mighty ransom; task my pow'r;
Let there be danger, difficulty, death,
To enhance the price.

Baj. I take thee at thy word.
Bring me the Tartar's head.

Axal. Ha!

Baj. Tamerlane's!
That death, that deadly poison to my glory.

Axal. Prodigious! Horrid!

Sel. Lost! for ever lost!

Baj. And couldst thou hope to bribe me with aught else?

With a vile peace patch'd up on slavish terms?
With tributary kingship?—No!—To merit
A recompense from me, sate my revenge.

The Tartar is my bane, I cannot bear him:

One heav'n and earth can never hold us both;

Still shall we hate, and with defiance deadly

Keep rage alive, till one be lost for ever:

As if two suns should meet in the meridian,

And strive in fiery combat for the passage.

Weep'st thou, fond girl? Now, as thy king and father,

I charge thee, drive this slave from thy remembrance!

Hate shall be pious in thee. Come and join

To curse thy father's foes.

*[Bajazet leads out Selima, she looking back on Axalla,
who goes off on the opposite Side.]*

Axal. 'Tis what I fear'd; fool that I was t' obey!

The coward love, that could not bear her frown,

Has wrought his own undoing.

He bade me take her.—But, oh, gracious honour!

Upon what terms? My soul yet shudders at it.

The head of Tamerlane! monstrous impiety!

Bleed, bleed to death, my heart be virtue's martyr.

Oh, emperor! I own I ought to give thee

Some nobler mark, than dying, of my faith.

Then let the pains I feel my friendship prove,

'Tis easier far to die, than cease to love.

[Exit.]

SCENE II. TAMERLANE'S Camp.

Enter TAMERLANE and a Dervise.

Tam. Thou bring'st me thy credentials from the highest,

From Alha and our prophet. Speak thy message,
It must import the best and noblest ends.

Der. Thus speaks our holy Mahomet, who has giv'n
To reign and conquer: Ill dost thou repay *[thee]*

The bounties of his hand, unmindful of
The fountain whence thy streams of greatness flow.
Thou hast forgot high heav'n, hast beaten down
And trampled on religion's sanctity.

Tam. Now, as I am a soldier and a king
(The greatest names of honour), do but make
Thy imputation out, and Tamerlane
Shall do thee ample justice on himself.

So much the sacred name of heaven awes me,
Could I suspect my soul of harbouring aught
To its dishonour, I would search it strictly,
And drive th' offending thought with fury forth.

Der. Yes, thou hast hurt our holy prophet's honour,
By fostering the pernicious Christian sect:
Those, whom his sword pursu'd with fell destruction,
Thou tak'st into thy bosom, to thy councils;
They are thy only friends. The true believers
Mourn to behold thee favour this Axalla.

Tam. I fear me, thou out-go'st the prophet's order,
And bring'st his venerable name to shelter
A rudeness ill-becoming thee to use,
Or me to suffer. When thou nam'st my friend,
Thou nam'st a man beyond a monk's discerning,
Virtuous and great, a warrior and a prince.

Der. He is a Christian; there our law condemns him,
Although he were even all thou speak'st, and more.

Tam. 'Tis false; no law divine condemns the virtuous,
For differing from the rules your schools devise.
Look round, how Providence bestows alike
Sunshine and rain, to bless the fruitful year,
On different nations, all of different faiths;
And (though by several names and titles worshipp'd)
Heav'n takes the various tribute of their praise;
Since all agree to own, at least to mean,
One best, one greatest, only Lord of all.

Der. Most impious and profane!—Nay, frown not,
prince;
Full of the prophet, I despise the danger
Thy angry power may threaten. I command thee
To hear and to obey; since thus says Mahomet:

Why have I made thee dreadful to the nations?
Why have I giv'n thee conquest; but to spread
My sacred law ev'n to the utmost earth,
And make my holy Mecca the world's worship?
Go on, and wheresoe'er thy arms shall prosper,
Plant there the prophet's name; with sword and fire
Drive out all other faiths, and let the world
Confess him only.

Tam. Had he but commanded
My sword to conquer all, to make the world
Know but one Lord, the task were not so hard;
'Twere but to do what has been done already;
And Philip's son, and Cæsar did as much;
But to subdue th' unconquerable mind,
To make one reason have the same effect
Upon all apprehensions; to force this
Or this man just to think as thou and I do;
Impossible! unless souls were alike
In all, which differ now like human faces.

Der. Well might the holy cause be carried on,
If Musselmen did not make war on Musselmen.
Why hold'st thou captive a believing monarch?
Now, as thou hop'st to 'scape the prophet's curse,
Release the royal Bajazet, and join,
With force united, to destroy the Christians.

Tam. 'Tis well—I've found the cause that mov'd thy
zeal.

What shallow politician set thee on,
In hopes to fright me this way to compliance?

Der. Our prophet only——

Tam. No—thou dost belie him,
Thou maker of new faiths! that dar'st to build
Thy fond inventions on religion's name.
Religion's lustre is, by native innocence,
Divinely pure and simple from all arts;
You daub and dress her like a common mistress,
The harlot of your fancies; and by adding
False beauties, which she wants not, make the world
Suspect her angel's face is foul beneath,
And we not bear all lights. Hence, I have found thee.

Der. I have but one resort. Now aid me, prophet!
[Aside.]

Yet I have somewhat further to unfold;
Our prophet speaks to thee in thunder—thus——

[Draws a concealed Dagger, and offers to stab Tam.]

Tam. No, villain, heaven is watchful o'er its worshippers,
[Wresting the Dagger from him.]
And blasts the murderer's purpose. Think, thou wretch!
Think on the pains that wait thy crime, and tremble
When I shall doom thee——

Der. 'Tis but death at last;
And I will suffer greatly for the cause
That urg'd me first to the bold deed.

Tam. Oh, impious!
Enthusiasm thus makes villains martyrs.
[Pauses] It shall be so—To die! 'twere a reward—
Now learn the difference 'twixt thy faith and mine:
Thine bids thee lift thy dagger to my throat;
Mine can forgive the wrong, and bid thee live.
Keep thy own wicked secret, and be safe;
If thou repent'st, I have gain'd one to virtue,
And am, in that, rewarded for my mercy;
If thou continu'st still to be the same,
'Tis punishment enough to be a villain.
Hence! from my sight—It shocks my soul to think
That there is such a monster in my kind. [Exit Dervise.]
Whither will man's impiety extend?
Oh, gracious heav'n! dost thou withhold thy thunder,
When bold assassins take thy name upon 'em,
And swear they are the champions of thy cause?

Enter MONESES.

Mon. Oh, emperor! before whose awful throne
Th' afflicted never kneel in vain for justice, [Kneels.]
Undone, and ruin'd, blasted in my hopes,
Here let me fall before your sacred feet,
And groan out my misfortunes, till your pity
(The last support and refuge that is left me),
Shall raise me from the ground, and bid me live.

Tam. Rise, prince; nor let me reckon up thy worth,

And tell how boldly that might bid thee ask,
Lest I should make a merit of my justice,
The common debt I owe to thee, to all,
Ev'n to the meanest of mankind, the charter
By which I claim my crown, and heav'n's protection.
Speak, then, as to a king, the sacred name
Where pow'r is lodg'd, for righteous ends alone.

Mon. One only joy, one blessing, my fond heart
Had fix'd its wishes on, and that is lost:
That sister, for whose safety my sad soul
Endur'd a thousand fears——

Tam. I well remember,
When, ere the battle join'd, I saw thee first,
With grief uncommon to a brother's love,
Thou told'st a moving tale of her misfortunes,
Such as bespoke my pity. Is there aught
Thou canst demand from friendship? Ask, and have it.

Mon. First, oh! let me entreat your royal goodness:
Forgive the folly of a lover's caution,
That forg'd a tale of folly to deceive you.
Said I, she was my sister?—Oh! 'tis false;
She holds a dearer interest in my soul;
She was the mistress of my vows, my bride,
By contract mine; and long ere this the priest
Had ty'd the knot for ever, had not Bajazet——

Tam. Ha! Bajazet!—If yet his pow'r withholds
The cause of all thy sorrows, all thy fears,
E'en gratitude for once shall gain upon him,
Spite of his savage temper, to restore her.
This morn a soldier brought a captive beauty,
Sad though she seem'd, yet of a form more rare,
By much the noblest spoil of all the field;
E'en Scipio, or a victor yet most cold,
Might have forgot his virtue at her sight.
Struck with a pleasing wonder, I beheld her,
Till, by a slave that waited near her person,
I learn'd she was the captive sultan's wife:
Straight I forbade my eyes the dangerous joy
Of gazing long, and sent her to her lord.

Mon. There was Moneses lost. Too sure my heart

(From the first mention of her wondrous charms)
Presag'd it could be only my Arpasia.

Tam. Arpasia! didst thou say?

Mon. Yes, my Arpasia.

Tam. Sure I mistake, or I fain would mistake thee;
I nam'd the queen of Bajazet; his wife.

Mon. His queen! his wife! He brings that holy title
To varnish o'er the monstrous wrongs he has done me.

Tam. Alas! I fear me, prince, thy griefs are just;
Thou art indeed unhappy.

Mon. Can you pity me,
And not redress? Oh, royal Tamerlane! [Kneels.
Thou succour of the wretched, reach thy mercy
To save me from the grave and from oblivion;
Let thy justice

Restore me my Arpasia; give her back,
Back to my wishes, to my transports give her:
Oh! give her to me yet, while I have life
To bless thee for the bounty. Oh, Arpasia!

Tam. Unhappy, royal youth, why dost thou ask
What honour must deny? Ha! is she not
His wife, whom he has wedded, whom enjoy'd?
And wouldst thou have my partial friendship break
That holy knot, which ty'd once, all mankind
Agree to hold sacred and undissolvable?
The brutal violence would stain my justice,
And brand me with a tyrant's hated name
To late posterity.

Mon. Are then the vows,
The holy vows we register'd in heav'n,
But common air?

Tam. Could thy fond love forget
The violation of a first enjoyment?
But sorrow has disturb'd and hurt thy mind.

Mon. Perhaps it has; and like an idle madman,
That wanders with a train of hooting boys,
I do a thousand things to shame my reason.
Then let me fly, and bear my follies with me,
Far, far from the world's sight. Honour and fame,
Arms and the glorious war, shall be forgotten;

No noble sound of greatness or ambition
Shall wake my drowsy soul from her dead sleep,
Till the last trump do summon.

Tam. Let thy virtue
Stand up and answer to these warring passions,
That vex thy manly temper. From the moment
When first I saw thee, something wondrous noble
Shone through thy form, and won my friendship for thee,
Without the tedious form of long acquaintance;
Nor will I loose thee poorly for a woman.
Come, droop no more, thou shalt with me pursue
True greatness, till we rise to immortality.
Thou shalt forget these lesser cares, Moneses;
Thou shalt, and help me to reform the world.

Mon. Sacred Tamerlane!
Thy words are as the breath of angels to me.
But, oh! too deep the wounding grief is fix'd,
For any hand to heal.

Tam. This dull despair
Is the soul's laziness. Rouse to the combat,
And thou art sure to conquer. War shall restore thee:
The sound of arms shall wake thy martial ardour,
And cure this amorous sickness of thy soul.
The boy, fond love,
Is nurs'd and bred in sloth, and too much ease;
Near purling streams, in gloomy shades, he lies,
And loosely there, instructs his votaries,
Honour and active virtue to despise:
But if the trumpets echo from afar,
On silken wings sublime he cuts the air,
Scar'd at the noise and clangor of the war. [Exit.

ACT THE FOURTH.



SCENE I. *BAJAZET's Tent.*

Enter HALY and Dervise.

Haly. To 'scape with life from an attempt like this,
Demands my wonder justly.

Der. True, it may;
But 'tis a principle of his new faith;
'Tis what his Christian favourites have inspir'd;
Who fondly make a merit of forgiveness,
And give their foes a second opportunity,
If the first blow should miss.—Failing to serve
The sultan to my wish, and e'en despairing
Of further means t' effect his liberty,
A lucky accident retriev'd my hopes.

Haly. The prophet and our master will reward
Thy zeal in their behalf; but speak thy purpose.

Der. Just ent'ring here I met the Tartar general,
Fierce Omar.

Haly. He commands, if I mistake not,
This quarter of the army, and our guards.

Der. The same. By his stern aspect, and the fire

That kindled in his eyes, I guess'd the tumult
Some wrong had rais'd in his tempestuous soul;
A friendship of old date had giv'n me privilege
To ask of his concerns. In short, I learn'd,
That burning for the sultan's beauteous daughter,
He had begg'd her, as a captive of the war,
From Tamerlane; but meeting with denial
Of what he thought his services might claim,
Loudly he storms, and curses the Italian,
As cause of this affront. I join'd his rage,
And added to his injuries the wrongs
Our prophet daily meets with from Axalla.
But see, he comes. Improve what I shall tell,
And all we wish is ours.

[They seem to talk together aside.]

Enter OMAR.

Omar. No—if I forgive it,
Dishonour blast my name! Was it for this
That I directed his first steps to greatness,
Taught him to climb, and made him what he is?
Was it for this, that like a rock I stood
And stemm'd a torrent of our Tartar lords,
Who scorn'd his upstart sway? When Calibes,
In bold rebellion, drew e'en half the provinces
To own his cause, I, like his better angel,
Stood by his shaking throne, and fix'd it fast;
And am I now so lost to his remembrance,
That, when I ask a captive, he shall tell me,
She is Axalla's right, his Christian minion?

Der. Allow me, valiant Omar, to demand,
Since injur'd thus, why right you not yourself?
'The prize you ask is in your pow'r.

Omar. It is,
And I will seize it, in despite of Tamerlane
And that Italian dog.

Haly. What need of force,
When ev'ry thing concurs to meet your wishes?
Our mighty master would not wish a son

Nobler than Omar. From a father's hand
Receive that daughter, which ungrateful Tamerlane
Has to your worth deny'd.

Omar. Now, by my arms,
It will be great revenge. What will your sultan
Give to the man that shall restore his liberty,
His crown, and give him pow'r to wreak his hatred
Upon his greatest foe?

Haly. All he can ask,
And far beyond his wish. [Trumpets.

Omar. These trumpets speak
The emperor's approach; he comes once more
To offer terms of peace. Retire within.
I will know further—he grows deadly to me;
And curse me, prophet, if I not repay
His hate, with retribution full as mortal. [Exeunt.

SCENE II. A Tent.

ARPASIA discovered lying on a Couch.

SONG.

To thee, oh gentle sleep, alone
Is owing all our peace;
By thee our joys are heighten'd shown,
By thee our sorrows cease.

The nymph, whose hand, by fraud or force,
Some tyrant has possess'd,
By thee, obtaining a divorce,
In her own choice is bless'd.

Oh, stay! Arpasia bids thee stay;
The sadly weeping fair
Conjures thee not to lose in day
The object of her care.

To grasp whose pleasing form she sought,
That motion chas'd her sleep;
Thus by ourselves are oft'nest wrought
The griefs for which we weep.

Arp. Oh, death! thou gentle end of human sorrows,
Still must my weary eye-lids vainly wake
In tedious expectation of thy peace?
Why stand thy thousand thousand doors still open,
To take the wretched in, if stern religion
Guards ev'ry passage, and forbids my entrance,
When urg'd with griefs beyond a mortal sufferance?
But here it must not be. Think then, *Arpasia*,
Think on the sacred dictates of thy faith,
And let that arm thy virtue to perform
What *Cato's* daughter durst not—Live, *Arpasia*,
And dare to be unhappy.

Enter TAMERLANE.

Tam. When fortune smiles upon the soldier's arms,
And adds e'en beauty to adorn his conquest,
Yet she ordains the fair should know no fears,
Such welcome as a camp can give, sultaness,
We hope you have receiv'd; it shall be larger,
And better as it may.

Arp. Since I have borne
That miserable mark of fatal greatness,
I have forgot all diff'rence of conditions;
Sceptres and fetters are grown equal to me,
And the best change my fate can bring is death.

Tam. Oh! teach my pow'r
To cure those ills which you unjustly suffer,
Lest heav'n should wrest it from my idle hand,
If I look on, and see you weep in vain.

Arp. Not that my soul disdains the gen'rous aid
Thy royal goodness proffers; but, oh, emperor!

Tam. Why is my pity all that I give
To tears like yours? And yet I fear 'tis all;
Nor dare I ask what mighty loss you mourn,
Lest honour should forbid to give it back.

Arp. No, *Tamerlane*, nor did I mean thou shouldst.
But know (though to the weakness of my sex
I yield these tears) my soul is more than man.
Think I am born a Greek, nor doubt my virtue;

They must be mighty evils that can vanquish
A Spartan courage, and a Christian faith.

Enter BAJAZET.

Baj. To know no thought of rest! to have the mind
Still minist'ring fresh plagues, as in a circle,
Where one dishonour treads upon another;
What know the fiends beyond it?—Ha! by hell,

[Sees Arpasia and Tamerlane.]

There wanted only this to make me mad.
Comes he to triumph here? to rob me of my love,
And violate the last retreat of happiness?

Tam. But that I read upon thy frowning brow,
That war yet lives and rages in thy breast;
Once more (in pity to the suff'ring world)
I meant to offer peace.

Baj. And mean'st thou too
To treat it with our empress; and to barter
The smiles which fortune gave thee for her favours?

Arp. What would the tyrant?

[Aside.]

Baj. Seek'st thou thus our friendship?
Is this the royal usage thou didst boast?

Tam. The boiling passion that disturbs thy soul
Spreads clouds around, and makes thy purpose dark.—
Unriddle what thy mystic fury aims at.

Baj. Is it a riddle? Read it there explain'd;
There, in my shame. Now judge me thou, oh prophet,

And equal heav'n, if this demand not rage!
The peasant-hind, begot and born to slavery,
Yet dares assert a husband's sacred right,
And guards his homely couch from violation:
And shall a monarch tamely bear the wrong
Without complaining?

Tam. If I could have wrong'd thee,
If conscious virtue, and all-judging heav'n,
Stood not between, to bar ungovern'd appetite,
What hinder'd, but, in spite of thee my captive,
I might have us'd a victor's boundless power,

And sated every wish my soul could form?

But, to secure thy fears, know, Bajazet,

This is among the things I dare not do.

Baj. By hell, 'tis false! else wherefore art thou present?

What cam'st thou for, but to undo my honour?

I found thee holding amorous parley with her,

Gazing and glutting on her wanton eyes,

And bargaining for pleasures yet to come:

My life, I know, is the devoted price——

But take it, I am weary of the pain.

Tam. Yet, ere thou rashly urge my rage too far,

I warn thee to take heed: I am a man,

And have the frailties common to man's nature;

The fiery seeds of wrath are in my temper,

And may be blown up to so fierce a blaze

As wisdom cannot rule. Know, thou hast touch'd me

Ev'n in the nicest, tend'rest part, my honour;

My honour! which, like pow'r, disdains being question'd;

Thy breath has blasted my fair virtue's fame,

And mark'd me for a villain, and a tyrant.

Arp. And stand I here an idle looker on,

To see my innocence murder'd and mangled

By barbarous hands, nor can revenge the wrong?

Art thou a man, and dar'st thou use me thus?

[*To Bajazet.*

Hast thou not torn me from my native country,

From the dear arms of my lamenting friends,

From my soul's peace, and from my injur'd love,

And driv'n me to the brink of black despair?

And is it in thy malice yet to add

A wound more deep, to sully my white name,

My virtue?——

Baj. Yes, thou hast thy sex's virtues,

Their affectation, pride, ill-nature, noise,

Proneness to change, e'en from the joy that pleas'd
'em:

So gracious is your idol, dear variety,

That for another love you would forego
An angel's form, to mingle with a devil's.

Arp. Why sought'st thou not from thy own impious
tribe

A wife like one of these?

Know, I abhor, detest, the crime thou mention'st;
Not that I fear or reverence thee, thou tyrant;
But that my soul, conscious of whence it sprung,
Sits unpolluted in its sacred temple,
And scorns to mingle with a thought so mean.

Tam. Oh, pity! that a greatness so divine
Should meet a fate so wretched, so unequal,
Though blind and wilful to the good that courts thee,
[To Bajazet.

With open-handed bounty heav'n pursues thee,
And bids thee (undeserving as thou art,
And monstrous in thy crimes) be happy yet;
Whilst thou, in fury, dost avert the blessing,
And art an evil genius to thyself.

Baj. No—Thou, thou art my greatest curse on earth!
Thou, who hast robb'd me of my crown and glory,
And now pursu'st me to the verge of life,
To spoil me of my honour. Thou! thou hypocrite!
That wear'st a pageant outside show of virtue,
To cover the hot thoughts that glow within!
Thou rank adulterer!

Tam. Oh, that thou wert
The lord of all those thousands that lie breathless
On yonder field of blood, that I again
Might hunt thee, in the face of death and danger,
Through the tumultuous battle, and there force thee,
Vanquish'd and sinking underneath my arm,
To own thou hast traduc'd me like a villain.

Baj. Ha! does it gall thee, tartar? By revenge,
It joys me much to find thou feel'st my fury.
Yes, I will echo to thee, thou adulterer!
Thou dost profane the name of king and soldier,
And, like a ruffian bravo, cam'st with force
To violate the holy marriage-bed.

Tam. Wert thou not shelter'd by thy abject state,
The captive of my sword; by my just anger,
My breath, like thunder, should confound thy pride,
And doom thee dead this instant with a word.

Baj. 'Tis false! my fate's above thee, and thou dar'st not.

Tam. Ha! dare not! Thou hast rais'd my pond'rous rage,
And now it falls to crush thee at a blow.
A guard there!—

Enter Guard.

Seize and drag him to his fate! [*They seize Bajazet.*
Tyrant, I'll do a double justice on thee;
At once revenge myself, and all mankind.

Baj. Well dost thou, ere thy violence and lust
Invade my bed, thus to begin with murder:
Drown all thy fears in blood, and sin securely.

Tam. Away!

Arp. [*Kneeling*] Oh, stay! I charge thee, by renown;
By that bright glory thy great soul pursues,
Call back the doom of death!

Tam. Fair injur'd excellence,
Why dost thou kneel, and waste such precious pray'rs,
For one to goodness lost, who first undid thee,
Who still pursues, and aggravates the wrong?

Baj. By Alha! no—I will not wear a life
Bought with such vile dishonour.—Death shall free
me

At once from infamy, and thee, thou traitress!

Arp. No matter, though the whistling winds grow
loud,

And the rude tempest roars, 'tis idle rage:
Oh! mark it not; but let thy steady virtue
Be constant to its temper. Save his life,
And save Arpasia from the sport of talkers.
Think how the busy, meddling world will toss
Thy mighty name about, in scurril mirth;
Branding thy vengeance as a foul design;

And make such monstrous legends of our lives,
As late posterity shall blush in reading.

Tam. Oh, matchless virtue! Yes, I will obey;
Though laggard in the race, admiring yet,
I will pursue the shining path thou tread'st.
Sultan, be safe! reason resumes her empire,

[The Guards release Bajazet.]

And I am cool again.—Here break we off,
Lest further speech should minister new rage.
Wisely from dangerous passions I retreat,
To keep a conquest which was hard to get:
And, oh! 'tis time I should for flight prepare,
A war more fatal seems to threaten there,
And all my rebel-blood assists the fair:
One moment more, and I too late shall find,
That love's the strongest pow'r that lords it o'er the
mind.

[Exit, followed by the Guards.]

Baj. To what new shame, what plague am I reserv'd?
Why hast thou for'd this nauseous life upon me?
Is it to triumph o'er me?—But I will,
I will be free; I will forget thee all;
Death shall expunge at once, and ease my soul.
Prophet, take notice, I disclaim thy paradise,
Thy fragrant bow'rs, and everlasting shades;
'Thou hast plac'd woman there, and all thy joys are
tainted.

[Exit.]

Arp. A little longer yet, be strong, my heart;
A little longer let the busy spirits
Keep on their cheerful round.
And see the poor Moneses comes to take
One sad adieu, and then we part for ever.

Enter MONESES.

Mon. Already am I onward of my way;
Thy tuneful voice comes like a hollow sound,
At distance, to my ears. My eyes grow heavy,
And all the glorious lights of heav'n look dim;
'Tis the last office they shall ever do me,
To view thee once, and then to close and die.

Arp. Alas, how happy have we been, Moneses!
 Ye gentle days, that once were ours, what joys
 Did every cheerful morning bring along!
 No fears, no jealousies, no angry parents,
 That for unequal births, or fortunes, frown'd;
 But love, that kindly join'd our hearts, to bless us,
 Made us a blessing too to all besides.

Mon. Oh, cast not thy remembrance back, Arpasia!
 'Tis grief unutterable; 'tis distraction!
 But let this last of hours be peaceful sorrow!
 Here let me kneel, and pay my latest vows.
 Be witness, all ye saints, thou heav'n and nature,
 Be witness of my truth, for you have known it!
 Be witness, that I never knew a pleasure,
 In all the world could offer, like Arpasia!
 Be witness, that I liv'd but in Arpasia!
 And, oh, be witness that her loss has kill'd me!

Arp. Oh, my Moneses,
 While thou art speaking, life begins to fail,
 And ev'ry tender accent chills like death.
 The last dear object of my parting soul
 Will be Moneses; the last breath that lingers
 Within my panting breast, shall sigh Moneses.

Mon. It is enough! Now to thy rest, my soul,
 The world and thou have made an end at once.

Arp. Fain would I still detain thee, hold thee still:
 Nor honour can forbid, that we together
 Should share the poor few minutes that remain:
 I swear, methinks this sad society
 Has somewhat pleasing in it.—Death's dark shades
 Seem, as we journey on, to lose their horror;
 At near approach the monsters, form'd by fear,
 Are vanish'd all, and leave the prospect clear:
 Amidst the gloomy vale, a pleasing scene,
 With flow'rs adorn'd, and never-fading green,
 Inviting stands, to take the wretched in:
 No wars, no wrongs, no tyrants, no despair,
 Disturb the quiet of a place so fair,
 But injur'd lovers find Elysium there.

Exeunt. }

Re-enter BAJAZET, with OMAR, HALY, and the Dervise.

Baj. Now, by the glorious tomb that shrines our prophet,

By Mecca's sacred temple, here I swear,
Our daughter is thy bride! and to that gift
Such wealth, such pow'r, such honours will I add,
That monarchs shall with envy view thy state,
And own thou art a demi-god to them.
Thou hast given me what I wish'd, pow'r of revenge,
And when a king rewards, 'tis ample retribution.

Omar. Twelve Tartar lords, each potent in his tribe,
Have sworn to own my cause, and draw their thousands,
To-morrow, from the ungrateful Parthian's side.
The day declining, seems to yield to night,
Ere little more than half her course be ended.
In an auspicious hour prepare for flight;
The leaders of the troops through which we pass,
Rais'd by my pow'r, devoted to my service,
Shall make our passage secret and secure.

Der. Already, mighty sultan, thou art safe,
Since by yon passing torches' light I guess,
To his pavilion Tamerlane retires,
Attended by a train of waiting courtiers.
All who remain within these tents are thine,
And hail thee as their lord.

Ha! the Italian prince,
With sad Moneses, are not yet gone forth.

Baj. Ha! with our queen and daughter!

Omar. They are ours:

I mark'd the slaves who waited on Axalla;
They, when the emperor pass'd out, press'd on,
And mingled with the crowd, nor miss'd their lord:
He is your pris'ner, sir: I go this moment,
To seize, and bring him to receive his doom. *[Exit.*

Baj. Haste, Haly, follow, and secure the Greek:
Him too I wish to keep within my power. *[Exit Haly.*

Der. If my dread lord permit his slave to speak,

I would advise to spare Axalla's life,
'Till we are safe beyond the Parthian's power :
Him, as our pledge of safety, may we hold ;
And, could you gain him to assist your flight,
It might import you much.

Baj. Thou counsell'st well ;
And though I hate him (for he is a Christian,
And to my mortal enemy devoted),
Yet, to secure my liberty and vengeance,
I wish he now were ours.

Der. And see! they come!
Fortune repents; again she courts your side,
And, with this first fair offering of success,
She woos you to forget her crime of yesterday.

Re-enter OMAR, with AXALLA prisoner ; SELIMA follows weeping.

Axal. I wo'not call thee villain ; 'tis a name
Too holy for thy crime. To break thy faith,
And turn a rebel to so good a master,
Is an ingratitude unmatch'd on earth.
The first revolting angel's pride could only
Do more than thou hast done. Thou copie'st well,
And keep'st the black original in view.

Omar. Do rage, and vainly call upon thy master
To save his minion. My revenge has caught thee,
And I will make thee curse that fond presumption
That set thee on to rival me in aught.

Baj. Christian, I hold thy fate at my disposal!
One only way remains to mercy open ;
Be partner of my flight, and my revenge,
And thou art safe. The other choice is death.

Axal. Then briefly thus. Death is the choice I make ;
Since, next to heav'n, my master and my friend
Has interest in my life, and still shall claim it.

Baj. Then take thy wish—Call in our mates!

Sel. My father,
If yet you have not sworn to cast me off,
And turn me out to wander in misfortune ;

If yet my voice be gracious in your ears;

If yet my duty and my love offend not;

Oh, call your sentence back, and save Axalla.

Baj. Rise, Selina! The slave deserves to die,
Who durst, with sullen pride, refuse my mercy:
Yet, for thy sake, once more I offer life.

Sel. Some angel whisper to my anxious soul,
What I shall do to save him.—

Oh, my Axalla, seem but to consent.—

[*Aside to Axalla.*

Unkind and cruel, will you then do nothing?

I find I am not worth thy least of cares.

Axal. Oh! labour not to hang dishonour on me!
I could bear sickness, pain, and poverty,
Those mortal evils, worse than death, for thee.
But this—it has the force of fate against us,
And cannot be.

Sel. See, see, sir! he relents; [To *Bajazet.*
Already he inclines to own your cause.

A little longer, and he is all yours.

Baj. Then mark how far a father's fondness yields.
'Till midnight I defer the death he merits,
And give him up till then to thy persuasion.
If by that time he meets my will, he lives;
If not, thyself shalt own he dies with justice.

Axal. 'Tis but to lengthen life upon the rack.
I am resolv'd already.

Sel. Oh! be still,
Nor rashly urge a ruin on us both;
'Tis but a moment more I have to save thee.
Be kind, auspicious Alha, to my pray'r;
More for my love, than for myself, I fear;
Neglect mankind awhile, and make him all thy care!

[*Exit, with Axalla.*

Baj. Monecs—is that dog secur'd?

Omar. He is.

Baj. 'Tis well—My soul perceives returning greatness,

As nature feels the spring. Lightly she bounds,

And shakes dishonour, like a burden, from her,
Once more imperial, awful, and herself.

So, when of old, Jove from the Titans fled,

Ammon's rude front his radiant face bely'd,

And all the majesty of heav'n lay hid.

At length, by fate, to pow'r divine restor'd,

His thunder taught the world to know its lord,

The god grew terrible again, and was again ador'd.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE FIFTH.



SCENE I. BAJAZET's Tent.

ARPASIA discovered.

Arp. Sure 'tis a horror, more than darkness brings,
That sits upon the night! Fate is abroad;
Some ruling fiend hangs in the dusky air,
And scatters ruin, death, and wild distraction
O'er all the wretched race of man below.
Not long ago, a troop of ghastly slaves
Rush'd in, and forc'd Moneses from my sight;
Death hung so heavy on his drooping spirits,
That scarcely could he say—Farewell—for ever!
And yet, methinks, some gentle spirit whispers,
Thy peace draws near, Arpasia, sigh no more!
And see, the king of terrors is at hand;
His minister appears.

Enter BAJAZET and HALY.

Baj. The rest I leave
To thy dispatch. For, oh, my faithful Haly,
Another care has taken up thy master.
Spite of the high-wrought tempest in my soul,

Spite of the pangs which jealousy has cost me,
This haughty woman reigns within my breast.

[*Apart to Haly.*

Haly. Why wears my lord
An anxious thought for what his pow'r commands?
When, in an happy hour, you shall, ere long,
Have borne the empress from amidst your foes,
She must be yours, be only and all yours.

Bay. On that depends my fear: Yes, I must have her;
I own, I will not, cannot go without her.

Be near to wait my will. [Exit *Haly.*

When last we parted, 'twas on angry terms;
Let the remembrance die, or kindly think
That jealous rage is but an hasty flame,
That blazes out, when love too fiercely burns.

Arp. For thee to wrong me, and for me to suffer,
Is the hard lesson which my soul has learnt;
Nor is it worth my leisure to distinguish
If love or jealousy commit the violence:
Each have alike been fatal to my peace,
Confirming me a wretch, and thee a tyrant.

Bay. Still to deform thy gentle brow with frowns,
And still to be perverse, it is a manner
Abhorrent from the softness of thy sex:
Women, like summer storms, awhile are cloudy,
Burst out in thunder, and impetuous show'rs;
But straight the sun of beauty dawns abroad,
And all the fair horizon is serene.

Arp. Then, to retrieve the honour of my sex,
Here I disclaim that changing and inconstancy:
To thee I will be ever as I am.

Bay. Thou say'st I am a tyrant; think so still,
And let it warn thy prudence to lay hold
On the good hour of peace, that courts thee now.
Souls, form'd like mine, brook being scorn'd but ill.
Be well advis'd, and profit by my patience;
It is a short-liv'd virtue.

Arp. Turn thy eyes
Back on the story of my woes, barbarian!
Thou that hast violated all respects

Due to my sex and honour of my birth!
Thou brutal ravisher, can I have peace with thee?
Impossible! First heav'n and hell shall join;
They only differ more.

Baj. I see, 'tis vain
To court thy stubborn temper with endearments.
Resolve, this moment, to return my love,
And be the willing partner of my flight,
Or, by the prophet's holy law, thou diest.

Arp. And dost thou hope to fright me with the phantom
Death? 'Tis the greatest mercy thou canst give;
Know, I disdain to aid thy treach'rous purpose;
And, shouldst thou dare to force me, with my cries
I will call heav'n and earth to my assistance.

Baj. Confusion! dost thou brave me? But my wrath
Shall find a passage to thy swelling heart,
And rack thee worse than all the pains of death.
That Grecian dog, the minion of thy wishes,
Shall be dragg'd forth, and butcher'd in thy sight;
Thou shalt behold him when his pangs are terrible,
'Till thou shalt rend thy hair, tear out thy eyes,
And curse thy pride, while I applaud my vengeance.

Arp. Oh, fatal image! all my pow'rs give way,
And resolution sickens at the thought;
Come, all ye great examples of my sex,
Chaste virgins, tender wives, and pious matrons;
Come to my aid, and teach me to defy
The malice of this fiend! I feel, I feel
Your sacred spirit arm me to resistance.
Yes, tyrant, I will stand this shock of fate;
Will live to triumph o'er thee, for a moment,
Then die well pleas'd, and follow my Moneses.

Baj. Thou talk'st it well. But talking is thy privilege;
'Tis all the boasted courage of thy sex;
Though, for thy soul, thou dar'st not meet the danger.

Arp. By all my hopes of happiness I dare!—
My soul is come within her ken of heav'n;
Charm'd with the joys and beauties of that place,
Her thoughts and all her cares she fixes there,
And 'tis in vain for thee to rage below.

Baj. This moment is the trial.

Arp. Let it come!

This moment then shall show I am a Greek,
And speak my country's courage in my suffering.

Baj. Here, mercy, I disclaim thee! Mark me, traitress!
My love prepares a victim to thy pride,
And when it greets thee next 'twill be in blood. [*Exit.*]

Arp. My heart beats higher, and my nimble spirits
Ride swiftly through their purple channel's round.
'Tis the last blaze of life. Nature revives,
Like a dim winking lamp, that flashes brightly
With parting light, and straight is dark for ever.
And see, my last of sorrows is at hand;
Death and Moneses come together to me;
As if my stars, that had so long been cruel,
Grew kind at last, and gave me all I wish.

Enter MONESES, guarded by some Mutes; others attending with a Cup of Poison, and a Bow-string.

Mon. I charge ye, O ye ministers of fate!

Be swift to execute your master's will;
Bear me to my Arpasia; let me tell her,
The tyrant is grown kind. He bids me go,
And die beneath her feet.

Arp. If it be happiness, alas! to die,
To lie forgotten in the silent grave,
To love and glory lost, and from among
The great Creator's works expung'd and blotted,
Then, very shortly, shall we both be happy.

Mon. There is no room for doubt; 'tis certain bliss.
The tyrant's cruel violence, thy loss,
Already seem more light; nor has my soul
One unrepented guilt upon remembrance,
To make me dread the justice of hereafter:
But, standing now on the last verge of life,
Boldly I view the vast abyss, eternity,
Rager to plunge, and leave my woes behind me.

Arp. By all the truth of our past loves, I vow,
To die appears a very nothing to me.
This very now I could put off my being

Without a groan ; but to behold thee die!——
Nature shrinks in me at the dreadful thought,
Nor can my constancy sustain this blow.

Mon. Since thou art arm'd for all things after death,
Why should the pomp and preparation of it
Be frightful to thy eyes? There's not a pain,
Which age or sickness brings, the least disorder
That vexes any part of this fine frame,
But's full as grievous. All that the mind feels
Is much, much more.——

*Enter a Mute ; he signs to the Rest, who proffer a Bow-
string to MONESES.*

And see, I go to prove it.

Arp. Think, ere we part!

Mon. Of what?

Arp. Of something soft,
Tender and kind, of something wondrous sad.
Oh, my full soul!

Mon. My tongue is at a loss ;
Thoughts crowd so fast, thy name is all I've left,
My kindest, truest, dearest, best Arpasia!

[The Mutes struggle with him.]

Arp. I have a thousand thousand things to utter,
A thousand more to hear yet. Barbarous villains!
Give me a minute. Speak to me, MoneSES!

Mon. Speak to thee? 'Tis the business of my life,
'Tis all the use I have for vital air.

Stand off, ye slaves! To tell thee that my heart
Is full of thee ; that even, at this dread moment,
My fond eyes gaze with joy and rapture on thee ;
Angels, and light itself, are not so fair——

Enter BAJAZET, HALY, and Attendants.

Baj. Ha! wherefore lives this dog? Be quick, ye
slaves!

And rid me of my pain.

Mon. For only death,
And the last night, can shunt out my Arpasia.

[The Mutes strangle MoneSES.]

Arp. Oh, dismal! 'tis not to be borne! Ye moralists!
Ye talkers! what are all your precepts now?
Patience! Distraction! Blast the tyrant, blast him,
Avenging lightnings! Snatch him hence, ye fiends!
Love! Death! Monesoes! [Dies.

Baj. Fly, ye slaves!
And fetch me cordials. No, she shall not die!
Spite of her sullen pride, I'll hold in life,
And force her to be blest against her will.

Haly. Already 'tis beyond the power of art;
For see, a deadly cold has froze the blood,
The pliant limbs grow stiff, and lose their use,
And all the animating fire is quench'd.

Baj. Can it be possible? Can rage and grief,
Can love and indignation be so fierce,
So mortal in a woman's heart? Confusion!
Is she escap'd then? What is royalty,
If those that are my slaves, and should live for me,
Can die, and bid defiance to my power? [Exeunt.

SCENE II.

Enter BAJAZET and the Dervise.

Der. The valiant Omar sends to tell thy greatness
The hour of flight is come, and urges haste;
Since he descries, near Tamerlane's pavilion,
Bright troops of crowding torches, who from thence,
On either hand, stretch far into the night,
And seem to form a shining front of battle.
Behold, e'en from this place thou may'st discern them.
[Looking out.

Baj. By Alha, yes! they cast a day around 'em,
And the plain seems thick set with stars, as heav'n.
Ha! or my eyes are false, they move this way;
'Tis certain so. Fly, Haly, to our daughter.
[Exit Haly.

Let some secure the Christian prince Axalla:
We will be gone this minute.

Enter OMAR.

Omar. Lost! undone!

Baj. What mean'st thou?

Omar. All our hopes of flight are lost.
Mirvan and Zama, with the Parthian horse,
Enclose us round; they hold us in a toil.

Baj. Ha! whence this unexpected curse of chance?

Omar. Too late I learn'd, that early in the night
A slave was suffer'd, by your daughter's order,
To pass the guard. I clove the villain down
Who yielded to his flight; but that's poor vengeance.
That fugitive has rais'd the camp upon us,
And unperceiv'd, by favour of the night,
In silence they have march'd to intercept us.

Baj. My daughter! Oh, the traitress!

Der. Yet we have

Axalla in our pow'r; and angry Tamerlane
Will buy his fav'rite's life on any terms.

Omar. With those few friends I have, I for awhile
Can face their force: if they refuse us peace,
Revenge shall sweeten ruin.

[*Exit.*

Re-enter HALY, with SELIMA, weeping.

Baj. See where she comes, with well-dissembled innocence;

With truth and faith so lovely in her face,
As if she durst e'en disavow the falsehood.
Hop'st thou to make amends with trifling tears,
For my lost crown, and disappointed vengeance?
Ungrateful Selima! thy father's curse!
Bring forth the minion of her foolish heart;
He dies this moment.

Haly. Would I could not speak
The crime of fatal love! The slave who fled,
By whom we are undone, was that Axalla.

Baj. Ha! say'st thou?

Haly. Hid beneath that vile appearance,
The princess found a means for his escape.

Sel. I am undone! e'en nature has disclaim'd me!
My father! have I lost you all? My father!

Baj. Talk'st thou of nature, who hast broke her bands?

Thou art my bane, thou witch, thou infant parricide!

But I will study to be strangely cruel;

I will forget the folly of my fondness;

Drive all the father from my breast; now snatch thee,

Tear thee to pieces, drink thy treach'rous blood,

And make thee answer all my great revenge!

Now, now, thou traitress!

[Offers to kill her.]

Sel. Plunge the poniard deep!

[Embraces him.]

The life my father gave shall hear his summons,

And issue at the wound;

Since from your spring I drew the purple stream,

And I must pay it back, if you demand it.

Baj. Hence from my thoughts, thou soft, relenting weakness!

Hast thou not giv'n me up a prey—betray'd me?

Sel. Oh, not for worlds! not e'en for all the joys,

Love, or the prophet's paradise can give!

Amidst the thousand pains of anxious tenderness,

I made the gentle, kind Axalla swear

Your life, your crown, and honour should be safe.

Baj. Away! my soul disdains the vile dependence!

No, let me rather die, die like a king!

Shall I fall down at the proud Tartar's foot,

And say, "Have mercy on me!"—*[A shout]* Hark! they come!

Disgrace will overtake my ling'ring hand;

Die then! Thy father's shame, and thine, die with thee.

[Offers to kill her.]

Sel. For heav'n, for pity's sake!

Baj. No more, thou trifle!

[Selima catches hold of his Arm.]

Ha! dar'st thou bar my will? Tear off her hold!

Sel. What, not for life! Should I not plead for life?

Look on my eyes, which you so oft have kiss'd,

And swore they were your best-lov'd queen's, my mother's;

Behold 'em now, streaming for mercy, mercy!

Look on me, and deny me if you can!

'Tis but for life I beg. Is that a boon
So hard for me t' obtain, or you to grant?
Oh, spare me! spare your Selima, my father!

Baj. A lazy sloth hangs on my resolution:
It is my Selima!—Ha! what, my child!

And can I murder her?

[*Shouts.*

Again they come! I leave her to my foes!
And shall they triumph o'er the race of Bajazet?
Die, Selima! Is that a father's voice?
Rouse, rouse, my fury! Yes, she dies the victim
To my lost hopes. Out, out, thou foolish nature!
Justly she shares the ruin she has made.

Enter Mutes.

Seize her, ye slaves! and strangle her this moment!

[*To the Mutes.*

Sel. Oh, let me die by you!

I wo'not shrink! Oh, save me but from these!

Baj. Dispatch.

[*The Mutes seize her.*

Sel. But for a moment, while I pray
That heav'n may guard my father.

Baj. Dogs!

Sel. That you may only bless me ere I die. [*Shout.*

Baj. Ye tedious villains, then the work is mine.

[*As Bajazet runs at Selima with his Sword, enter Tamerlane, Axalla, &c. Axalla gets between Bajazet and Selima, whilst Tamerlane and the Rest drive Bajazet and the Mutes off the Stage.*

Axal. And am I come to save thee? oh, my joy!

This one success is more than all my wars,
The noblest, dearest glory of my sword.

Sel. Alas, Axalla! death has been around me;
My coward soul still trembles at the fright,
And seems but half secure, ev'n in thy arms.

Axal. Retire, my fair, and let me guard thee forth:
Blood and tumultuous slaughter are about us.
Nor will the pleasure of my heart be full,
Till all my fears are ended in thy safety.

[*Exeunt.*

Flourish. Re-enter TAMERLANE, the PRINCE of TANAIS, ZAMA, MIRVAN, and Soldiers; with BAJAZET, OMAR, and the Dervise, Prisoners.

Tam. Mercy at length gives up her peaceful sceptre,
And justice sternly takes her turn to govern;
'Tis a rank world, and asks her keenest sword,
To cut up villany of monstrous growth.
Zama, take care, that with the earliest dawn,
Those traitors meet the fate their treason merits!

[Points to Omar and the Dervise.

For thee, thou tyrant! [To Bajazet] whose oppressive violence

*Has ruin'd those thou shouldst protect at home;
What punishment is equal to thy crimes?
The doom thy rage design'd for me be thine:
Clos'd in a cage, like some destructive beast,
I'll have thee borne about in public view,
A great example of that righteous vengeance
That waits on cruelty and pride like thine.*

Baj. It is beneath me to decline my fate;
I stand prepar'd to meet thy utmost hate;
Yet think not I will long thy triumph see:
None want the means, when the soul dares be free.
I'll curse thee with my last, my parting breath,
And keep the courage of my life in death!
Then boldly venture on that world unknown;
It cannot use me worse than this has done.

[Exit Bajazet, guarded.]

Tam. Behold the vain effects of earth-born pride,
That scorn'd heav'n's laws, and all its pow'r defy'd,
That could the hand which form'd it first forget,
And fondly say, "I made myself be great!"
But justly those above assert their sway,
And teach ev'n kings what homage they should pay,
Who then rule best, when mindful to obey.

[Exit.]

EPILOGUE.

Too well we saw what must have been our fate,
When harmony with beauty join'd, of late,
Threaten'd the ruin of our sinking state;
Till you, from whom our being we receive,
In pity bid your own creation live:
With moving sounds you kindly drew the fair,
And fix'd once more that shining circle here:
The lyre you bring is half Apollo's praise;
Be ours the task to win and wear his bays.
Thin houses were before so frequent to us,
We wanted not a project to undo us;
We seldom saw your honours, but by chance,
As some folks meet their friends of Spain and France:
'Twas verse decay'd, or politics improv'd,
That had estrang'd you thus from what you lov'd.
Time was, when busy faces were a jest,
When wit and pleasure were in most request;
When cheerful theatres with crowds were grac'd;
But those good days of poetry are past.
Now sour reformers in an empty pit,
With table books, as at a lecture sit,
To take notes, and give evidence 'gainst wit.
Those who were once our friends, employ'd elsewhere,
Are busy now in settling peace and war:
With careful brows, at Tom's and Will's they meet,
And ask who did elections lose or get?
"Our friend has lost it."—"Faith, I'm sorry for't;
He's a good man, and ne'er was for the court;
He to no government will sue for grace,
By want of merit safe against a place.
By spite a patriot made, and sworn t' oppose
All who are uppermost, as England's foes:
Let Whig or Tory, any side prevail,
Still 'tis his constant privilege to rail."

Another, that the tax and war may cease,
Talks of the duke of Anjou's right, and peace:
And, from Spain's wise example, is for taking
A viceroy of the mighty monarch's making;
Who should all rights and liberties maintain,
And *English* laws by learn'd dragoons explain.

Come, leave these politics, and follow wit;
Here, uncontroll'd you may in judgment sit;
We'll never differ with a crowded pit:
We'll take you all, ev'n on your own conditions,
Think you great men and wondrous politicians;
And if you slight the offers which we make you,
No *Brentford* princes will for statesmen take you.

}

Tancred and Sigismunda.

A TRAGEDY.

BY JAMES THOMPSON, ESQ.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

Author of several Dramatic Pieces: and

PROMPTER OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.



Printed at the Chiswick Press,

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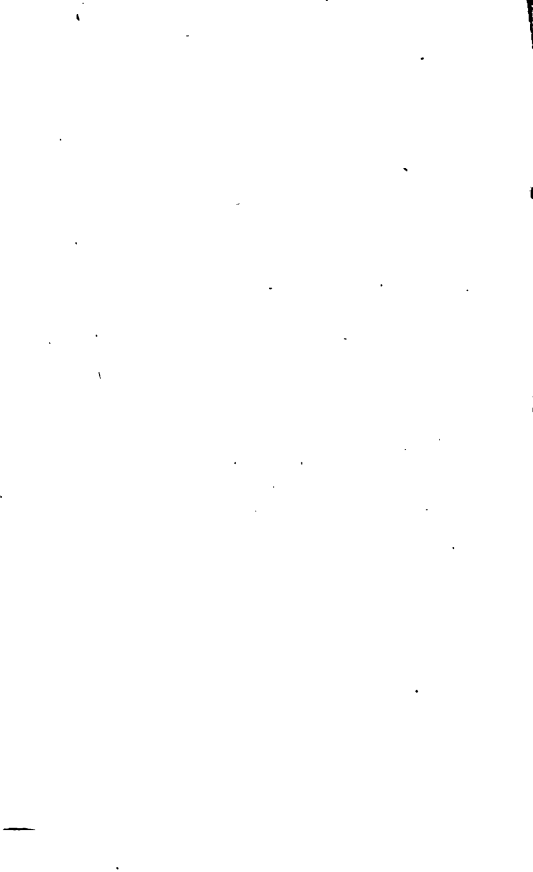
**FOR WHITTINGHAM AND ARLISS, PATERNOSTER
ROW, LONDON.**

1815.



TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA.

ONE of the numerous episodical novels which occur in *Gil Blas* furnished the plot and foundation of this tragedy, which was produced by the elegantly classical author of the *Seasons*, at Drury Lane Theatre in 1744. Its success was nearly commensurate with its merit, which is, in spite of critics, who have pronounced it fitter for the closet than the stage, of a very superior order; nor while harmonious and expressive natural poetry is held in estimation, will TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA cease to attract a numerous train of rational admirers.



PROLOGUE.

BOLD is the man, who, in this nicer age,
Presumes to tread the chaste, corrected stage.
Now with gay tinsel arts we can no more
Conceal the want of nature's sterling ore.
Our spells are vanish'd, broke our magic wand,
That us'd to waft you over sea and land.
Before your light the fairy people fade,
The demons fly—the ghost itself is laid.
In vain of martial scenes the loud alarms,
The mighty prompter thund'ring out to arms,
The playhouse posse clatt'ring from afar,
The close-wedg'd battle, and the din of war.
Now ev'n the senate seldom we convene;
The yawning fathers nod behind the scene.
Your taste rejects the glitt'ring false sublime,
To sigh in metaphor, and die in rhyme.
High rant is tumbled from his gall'ry throne:
Description, dreams—nay, similes are gone.

What shall we then? to please you how devise,
Whose judgment sits not in your ears nor eyes?
Thrice happy! could we catch great Shakspeare's art,
To trace the deep recesses of the heart:
His simple, plain sublime, to which is giv'n
To strike the soul with darted flame from heav'n:
Could we awake soft Otway's tender woe,
The pomp of verse and golden lines of Rowe.

We to your hearts apply: let them attend;
Before their silent, candid bar we bend.
If warm'd, they listen, 'tis our noblest praise:
If cold, they wither all the muse's bays.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

*As originally acted at
Drury Lane, 1744.*

*Covent Garden,
1812.*

<i>Tancred</i> . . .	Mr. Garrick.	Mr. Betty.
<i>Siffredi</i> . . .	Mr. Sheridan.	Mr. Egerton.
<i>Osmond</i> . . .	Mr. Delare.	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Rodolpho</i> . .	Mr. Havard.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Officers</i> . . .		{ Messrs. Brook, Grant, Heath, Sarjant, and Yarnold.
<i>Sigismunda</i> .	Mrs. Cibber.	Mrs. H. Johnston.
<i>Laura</i>	Miss Budgell.	Miss Cooke.

Barens, Officers, Guards, &c.

SCENE—*The City of PALERMO in ITALY.*

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. *The Palace.*

Enter SIGISMUNDA and LAURA.

Sig. Ah, fatal day to Sicily! the king
Touches his last moments!

Lau. So 'tis fear'd.

Sig. Laura, 'tis said, the heart is sometimes charg'd
With a prophetic sadness: such, methinks,
Now hangs on mine. The king's approaching death
Suggests a thousand fears. What troubles thence
May throw the state once more into confusion,
What sudden changes in my father's house
May rise, and part me from my dearest Tancred,
Alarms my thoughts.

Lau. The fears of love-sick fancy!
Perversely busy to torment itself.
But be assur'd your father's steady friendship,
Join'd to a certain genius, that commands,
Not kneels to fortune, will support and cherish,
Here in the public eye of Sicily,
This, I may call him, his adopted son,
The noble Tancred, form'd to all his virtues,

Is never flattered with such dear enchantment—
 As when she hears the praises of the man she loves—
Lau. Madam, your father comes.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. [To an Attendant as he enters] Lord Tancred is

Atten. My lord, he quickly will be here. [found.

Sif. 'Tis well—retire—You too, my daughter, leave

Sig. I go, my father—But how fares the king? [me.

Sif. He is no more. Gone to that awful state,

Where kings the crown wear only of their virtues.

Sig. How bright must then be his!—This stroke is
 He was this morning well, when to the chase [sudden;
 Lord Tancred went.

Sif. 'Tis true. But at his years

Death gives short notice—Drooping nature then,
 Without a gust of pain to shake it, falls.

His death, my daughter, was that happy period
 Which few attain. The duties of his day

Were all discharg'd, calm as evening skies

Was his pure mind, and lighted up with hopes

That open heaven; when for his last long sleep

Timely prepar'd, a lastitude of life,

A pleasing weariness of mortal joy,

Fell on his soul, and down he sunk to rest.

Oh, may my death be such!—He but one wish

Left unfulfill'd, which was to see count Tancred—

Sig. To see count Tancred!—Pardon me, my lord—

Sif. For what, my daughter?—But with such emotion,
 Why did you start at mention of count Tancred?

Sig. Nothing—I only hop'd the dying king
 Might mean to make some generous just provision
 For this your worthy charge, this noble orphan.

Sif. And he has done it largely—Leave me now—
 I want some private conference with lord Tancred.

[*Exeunt Sigismunda and Laura.*

My doubts are but too true—If these old eyes
 Can trace the marks of love, a mutual passion
 Has seiz'd, I fear, my daughter and this prince,
 My sovereign now—Should it be so? Ah, there,

There lurks a brooding tempest, that may shake
My long concerted scheme, to settle firm
The public peace and welfare, which the king
Has made the prudent basis of his will——
Away, unworthy views! you shall not tempt me!
Nor interest, nor ambition shall seduce
My fix'd resolve——Perish the selfish thought,
Which our own good prefers to that of millions!
He comes, my king, unconscious of his fortune.

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. My lord Siffredi, in your looks I read,
Confirm'd, the mournful news that fly abroad
From tongue to tongue—We then, at last, have lost
The good old king?

Sif. Yes, we have lost a father!
The greatest blessing heaven bestows on mortals,
A good, a worthy king!—Hear me, my Tancred,
And I will tell thee, in a few plain words,
How he deserv'd that best, that glorious title.
He lov'd his people, deem'd them all his children;
The good exalted, and depress'd the bad.
He sought alone the good of those for whom
He was entrusted with the sovereign power:
Well knowing that a people in their rights
And industry protected, living safe
Beneath the sacred shelter of the laws,
Are ne'er ungrateful. With unsparing hand
They will for him provide: their filial love
And confidence are his unfailing treasure,
And every honest man his faithful guard.

Tan. A general face of grief o'erspreads the city.
I mark'd the people, as I hither came,
In crowds assembled, struck with silent sorrow,
And pouring forth the noblest praise of tears.
A mingled murmur ran
Along the streets; and from the lonely court
Of him who can no more assist their fortunes,
I saw the courtier-fry, with eager haste,
All hurrying to Constantia.

Sif. Noble youth!

I joy to hear from thee these just reflections,
Worthy of riper years—But if they seek
Constantia, trust me, they mistake their course.

Tan. How! Is she not, my lord, the late king's sister,
Heir to the crown of Sicily? the last
Of our fam'd Norman line, and now our queen?

Sif. Tancred, 'tis true; she is the late king's sister,
The sole surviving offspring of that tyrant
William the Bad—born some months
After the tyrant's death, but not next heir.

Tan. You much surprise me—May I then presume
To ask who is?

Sif. Come nearer, noble Tancred,
Son of my care. I must, on this occasion,
Consult thy generous heart; which, when conducted
By rectitude of mind and honest virtues,
Gives better counsel than the hoary head—
Then know, there lives a prince, here in Palermo,
The lineal offspring of our famous hero,
And rightful heir of Sicily.

Tan. Great heaven! How far remov'd
From that our mighty founder?

Sif. His great grandson:
Sprung from his eldest son, who died untimely,
Before his father.

Tan. Ha! the prince you mean,
Is he not Manfred's son? The generous, brave,
Unhappy Manfred! whom the tyrant William,
You just now mention'd, not content to spoil
Of his paternal crown, threw into fetters,
And infamously murder'd?

Sif. Yes, the same.

Tan. But this prince,
Where has he lain conceal'd?

Sif. The late good king,
By noble pity mov'd, contriv'd to save him
From his dire father's unrelenting rage,
And had him rear'd in private, as became
His birth and hopes, with high and princely nurture.

Till now, too young to rule a troubled state,
By civil broils most miserably torn,
He in his safe retreat has lain conceal'd,
His birth and fortune to himself unknown;
But when the dying king to me intrusted,
As to the chancellor of the realm, his will,
He nam'd him his successor.

Tan. Happy youth!

He then will triumph o'er his father's foes,
O'er haughty Osmond, and the tyrant's daughter.

Sif. Ay, that is what I dread—the heat of youth;
There lurks, I fear, perdition to the state,
I dread the horrors of rekindled war:
Though dead, the tyrant still is to be fear'd;
His daughter's party still is strong and numerous:
Her friend, earl Osmond, constable of Sicily,
Experienc'd, brave, high-born, of mighty interest.
Better the prince and princess should by marriage
Unite their friends, their interest, and their claims!
Then will the peace and welfare of the land
On a firm basis rise.

Tan. My lord Sifredi,

If by myself I of this prince may judge,
That scheme will scarce succeed—Your prudent age
In vain will counsel, if the heart forbid it—
But wherefore fear? The right is clearly his;
All Sicily will rouse, all faithful hearts,
Will range themselves around prince Manfred's son.
For me, I here devote me to the service
Of this young prince; I every drop of blood
Will lose with joy, with transport in his cause—
Pardon my warmth—but that, my lord, will never
To this decision come—Then find the prince;
Lose not a moment to awaken in him
The royal soul. Perhaps he, now desponding,
Pines in a corner, and laments his fortune
That in the narrower bounds of private life
He must confine his aims, those swelling virtues
Which from his noble father he inherits.

Sif. Perhaps, regardless, in the common bane

Of youth he melts, in vanity and love.
But if the seeds of virtue glow within him,
I will awake a higher sense, a love
That grasps the loves and happiness of millions.

Tan. Why that surmise? Or should he love, *Siffredi*,
I doubt not, it is nobly, which will raise
And animate his virtues—Oh, permit me
To plead the cause of youth—Their virtue oft,
In pleasure's soft enchantment lull'd awhile,
Forgets itself; it sleeps and gaily dreams,
Till great occasion rouse it; then, all flame,
It walks abroad, with heighten'd soul and vigour,
And by the change astonishes the world.

Sif. Hear him, immortal shades of his great fathers!
Forgive me, sir, this trial of your heart.
Thou! thou art he!

Tan. *Siffredi*!

Sif. *Tancred*, thou!

Thou art the man of all the many thousands
That toil upon the bosom of this isle,
By heaven elected to command the rest,
To rule, protect them, and to make them happy!

Tan. *Manfred*, my father! I the last support
Of the fam'd Norman line, that awes the world!
I, who this morning wander'd forth an orphan,
Outcast of all but thee, my second father!
Thus call'd to glory! to the first great lot
Of humankind!—Oh, wonder-working hand,
That in majestic silence sways at will
The mighty movements of unbounded nature;
Oh, grant me, heaven, the virtues to sustain
This awful burden of so many heroes!
Let me not be exalted into shame,
Set up the worthless pageant of vain grandeur.
Meantime I thank the justice of the king,
Who has my right bequeath'd me. Thee, *Siffredi*,
I thank thee—Oh, I ne'er enough can thank thee!
Yes, thou hast been—thou art—shalt be my father!
Thou shalt direct my unexperient'd years,
Shalt be the ruling head, and I the hand.

Sif. It is enough for me—to see my sov'reign
Assert his virtues, and maintain his honour.

Tan. I think, my lord, you said the king committed
To you his will? I hope it is not clogg'd
With any base conditions, any clause,
To tyrannise my heart, and to Constantia
Enslave my hand devoted to another.

The hint you just now gave of that alliance,
You must imagine, wakes my fear. But know,
In this alone I will not bear dispute,
Not even from thee, Siffredi!—Let the council
Be straight assembled, and the will there open'd:
Thence issue speedy orders to convene,
This day ere noon, the senate: where those barons,
Who now are in Palermo, will attend,
To pay their ready homage to the king.

Sif. I go, my liege. But once again permit me
To tell you—Now, is the trying crisis,
That must determine of your future reign.
Oh, with heroic rigour watch your heart!
And to the sovereign duties of the king,
Th' unequal'd pleasures of a god on earth,
Submit the common joys, the common passions,
Nay, even the virtues of the private man.

Tan. Of that no more. They not oppose, but aid,
Invigorate, cherish, and reward each other. [*Exit Sif.*]
Now, generous Sigismunda, comes my turn
To show my love was not of thine unworthy,
When fortune bade me blush to look to thee.
But what is fortune to the wish of love?
A miserable bankrupt!

Quick, let me find her! taste that highest joy,
Th' exalted heart can know, the mix'd effusion
Of gratitude and love!—Behold, she comes!

Re-enter SIGISMUNDA.

My flutt'ring soul was all on wing to find thee,
My love, my Sigismunda!

Sig. Oh, my Tancred!

Tell me what means this mystery and gloom,
That lowers around? Just now involv'd in thought,

My father shot athwart me—You, my lord,
Seem strangely mov'd—I fear some dark event,
From the king's death to trouble our repose;
That tender calm we in the woods of Belmont
So happily enjoy'd——Explain this hurry,
What means it? say.

Tan. It means that we are happy!
Beyond our most romantic wishes happy!

Sig. You but perplex me more.

Tan. It means, my fairest,
That thou art queen of Sicily; and I
The happiest of mankind!
Because with thee I can adorn my throne.
Manfred, who fell by tyrant William's rage,
Was my father. [Pausing.]
You droop, my love; dejected on a sudden;
You seem to mourn my fortune—The soft tear
Springs in thy eye—Oh, let me kiss it off——
Why this, my Sigismunda?

Sig. Royal Tancred,
None at your glorious fortune can like me
Rejoice;—yet me alone, of all Sicilians,
It makes unhappy.

Tan. I should hate it then!
Should throw, with scorn, the splendid ruin from me!—
No, Sigismunda, 'tis my hope with thee
To share it, whence it draws its richest value.

Sig. You are my sov'reign—I at humble distance—

Tan. Thou art my queen! the sovereign of my soul!
The dear, the tender, gen'rous Sigismunda!

Sig. Your heart, I know, disdains the little thought
Of changing with the vain, external change
Of circumstance and fortune.

But ah! the hearts of kings are not their own.
Some high descended princess, who will bring
New power and interest to your throne, demands
Your royal hand—perhaps Constantia——

Tan. She!

Oh, name her not! were I this moment free
And disengag'd as he who never sigh'd
For matchless worth like thine, I should abhor

All thoughts of that alliance. Her fell father
Most basely murder'd mine;
And canst thou deem me then so poorly tame,
So cool a traitor to my father's blood,
As from the prudent cowardice of state
E'er to submit to such a base proposal?
They whom just heaven has to a throne exalted,
To guard the rights and liberties of others,
What duty binds them to betray their own?
Or if indeed, my choice must be directed
By views of public good, whom shall I choose
So fit to grace, to dignify a crown,
And beam sweet mercy on a happy people,
As thee, my love? Whom place upon my throne
But thee, descended from the good Siffredi?

Sig. Cease, cease to raise my hopes above my duty,
Charm me no more, my Tancred!—Oh, that we
In those blest woods, where first you won my soul,
Had pass'd our gentle days; far from the toil
And pomp of courts! Such is the wish of love;
'Tis all in vain—you cannot hush a voice
That murmurs here—I must not be persuaded! [wishes!]

Tan. [Kneeling] Hear me, thou soul of all my hopes and
And witness heaven, prime source of love and joy!
Not a whole warring world combin'd against me,
Shall ever shake my faith to Sigismunda!

[Trumpets and acclamations heard.]

But, hark! the public voice to duties call me,
Which with unwearied zeal I will discharge;
And thou, yes thou, shalt be my bright reward—
Yet—ere I go—to hush thy lovely fears, [hark,
Thy delicate objections—[Writes his name]—Take this
Sign'd with thy name, and give it to thy father:
Tell him 'tis my command it be fill'd up
With a most strict and solemn marriage contract.
How dear each tie! how charming to my soul!
That more unites me to my Sigismunda.

For thee, and for my people's good to live,
Is all the bliss which sov'reign power can give.

[Exit.]

In Sicily——

To yours I join my hand; with you will own
No int'rest and no party but my country.
Nor is your friendship only my ambition:
There is a dearer name, the name of father,
By which I should rejoice to call Siffredi.
Your daughter's hand would to the public weal
Unite my private happiness.

Sif. My lord,
You have my glad consent. To be allied
To your distinguish'd family and merit,
I shall esteem an honour. From my soul
I here embrace earl Osmond as my friend
And son.

Osm. You make him happy.
I from this moment vow myself the friend
And zealous servant of Siffredi's house.

Enter an Officer belonging to the Court.

Offi. [To Siffredi] The king, my lord, demands your
speedy presence.

Sif. I will attend him straight—Farewell, my lord;
The senate meets: there, a few moments hence,
I will rejoin you.

Osm. There, my noble lord,
We will complete this salutary work;
Will there begin a new auspicious era.

[*Exeunt Siffredi and Officer.*]

Siffredi gives his daughter to my wishes—
But does she give herself? Gay, young, and flatter'd,
Perhaps engag'd, will she her youthful heart
Yield to my harsher, uncomplaining years?
I am not form'd, by flattery and praise,
By sighs and tears, and all the whining trade
Of love, to feed a fair one's vanity;
To charm at once and spoil her. These soft arts
Nor suit my years nor temper; these be left
To boys and doting age. A prudent father,
By nature charg'd to guide and rule her choice,
Resigns his daughter to a husband's power,

Who with superier dignity, with reason,
And manly tenderness, will ever love her ;
Not first a kneeling slave, and then a tyrant. [Exit.

Enter RODOLPHO from the Senate.

Rod. This will perplexes all. No, Tancred, never
Can stoop to these conditions, which at once
Attack his rights, his honour, and his love.
Th' unjust, the base conditions of the will.
Uncertain, tost in cruel agitation,
He oft, methought, address'd himself to speak,
And interrupt Siffredi, who appear'd,
With conscious haste to dread that interruption,
And hurry'd on——But hark ! I hear a noise,
As if the assembly rose——

[Sigismunda and Attendants pass through the back Scene.

Enter LAURA.

Lau. Your high prais'd friend, the king,
Is false, most vilely false. The meanest slave
Had shown a nobler heart.
He Manfred's son ! away ! it cannot be !
The son of that brave prince could never sacrifice
All faith, all honour, gratitude, and love,
All in a moment——And for what ? why, truly,
For kind permission, gracious leave, to sit
On his own throne with tyrant William's daughter !

Rod. I stand amaz'd——You surely wrong him, Laura ;
There must be some mistake.

Lau. There can be none !
Siffredi read his full and free consent
Before th' applauding senate. True indeed,
A small remain of shame, a timorous weakness,
Even dastardly in falsehood, made him blush
To act this scene in Sigismunda's eye,
Who sunk beneath his perfidy and baseness.
Hence, till to-morrow he adjourn'd the senate !
To-morrow, fix'd with infamy to crown him !
Then, leading off his gay, triumphant princess,

He left the poor unhappy Sigismunda
 To bend her trembling steps to that sad home
 His faithless vows will render hateful to her—
 He comes—Farewell—I cannot bear his presence!
 [Exit.]

Enter TANCRED and SIFFREDI.

Tan. Avoid me, hoary traitor!—Go, Rodolpho,
 Give orders that all passages this way
 Be shut—Defend me from the hateful world,
 The bane of peace and honour—then return—

[Exit Rodolpho.]

What! dost thou haunt me still? Oh, monstrous insult!
 Unparallel'd indignity! Just heaven!
 Was ever king, was ever man so treated;
 So trampled into baseness?

Sif. Here, my liege,
 Here strike! I nor deserve, nor ask for mercy.

Tan. All, all but this I could have borne—but this!
 This daring insolence beyond example!
 This murd'rous stroke, that stabs my peace for ever!
 That wounds me there—there! where the human heart
 Most exquisitely feels—

Sif. Oh, bear it not,
 My royal lord; appease on me your vengeance!

Tan. Did ever tyrant image aught so cruel!
 The lowest slave that crawls upon the earth,
 Robb'd of each comfort heav'n bestows on mortals,
 On the bare ground has still his virtue left,
 The sacred treasure of an honest heart,
 Which thou hast dar'd, with rash, audacious hand,
 And impious fraud in me to violate—

Sif. Behold, my lord, that rash audacious hand,
 Which not repents its crime—Oh, glorious, happy!
 If by my ruin I can save your honour.

Tan. Such honour I renounce; with sovereign scorn
 Greatly detest it, and its mean adviser!
 Hast thou not dar'd beneath my name to shelter,
 Beneath thy sovereign's name, basely presum'd
 To shield a lie—a lie, in public utter'd,

To all deluded Sicily? But know,
This poor contrivance is as weak as base.
What! marry her! Constantia! her! the daughter
Of the fell tyrant who destroy'd my father!
The very thought is madness! Ere thou seest
The torch of Hymen light these hated nuptials,
Thou shalt behold Sicilia wrapt flames,
Her cities raz'd, her valleys drench'd with slaughter—
Love set aside, my pride assumes the quarrel;
My honour now is up; in spite of thee,
A world combin'd against me, I will give
This scatter'd will in fragments to the winds,
Assert my rights, the freedom of my heart,
Crush all who dare oppose me to the dust,
And heap perdition on thee!

Sif. Sir, 'tis just.

Exhaust on me thy rage; I claim it all.
But for these public threats thy passion utters,
'Tis what thou canst not do:

Tan. I cannot! ha!

What shall arrest my vengeance? Who?

Sif. Thyself.

Tan. Away! Dare not to justify thy crime!
That, that alone can aggravate its horror,
Add insolence to insolence—perhaps
May make my rage forget—

Sif. Oh, let it burst

On this grey head, devoted to thy service!
But when the storm has vented all its fury,
Thou then must hear—nay more, I know thou wilt—
Wilt hear the calm, yet stronger voice of reason.
Thou must reflect that there are other duties;
Yes, thou must

In calmer hours divest thee of thy love,
These common passions of the vulgar breast,
This boiling heat of youth, and be a king,
The lover of thy people!

Tan. Yes, I will be a king, but not a slave;
In this will be a king; in this my people
Shall learn to judge how I will guard their rights,

When they behold me vindicate my own.
But have I, say, been treated like a king?—
Heav'n's! could I stoop to such outrageous usage!
I were a mean, a shameless wretch, unworthy
To wield a sceptre in a land of slaves,
A soil abhorr'd of virtue; should belie
My father's blood, belie those very maxims,
At other times you taught my youth—Siffredi!

[In a softened tone of Voice.]

Sif. Behold, my prince, thy poor old servant,
Whose darling care, these twenty years, has been
To nurse thee up to virtue; behold him here,
Bent on his feeble knees, to beg, conjure thee,
With tears to beg thee to control thy passion,
And save thyself, thy honour, and thy people!
Kneeling with me, behold the many thousands
To thy protection trusted; fathers, mothers,
The sacred front of venerable age,
The tender virgin, and the helpless infant;
See them all

Here at thy feet conjuring thee to save them
From misery and war, from crimes and rapine!
Turn not away—Oh, is there not some part
In thy great heart, so sensible to kindness,
And generous warmth, some nobler part, to feel
The prayers and tears of these, the mingled voice
Of heaven and earth?

Tan. There is, and thou hast touch'd it.
Rise, rise, Siffredi—Oh, thou hast undone me!
Unkind old man!—Oh, ill-entreated Tancred!
Which way so'er I turn, dishonour rears
Her hideous front—and misery and ruin.
Why have you rais'd this miserable conflict
Betwixt the duties of the king and man?
Set virtue against virtue?—But hold, my soul,
Thy steady purpose—Tost by various passions
To this eternal anchor keep—There is,
Can be no public without private virtue—
Then, mark me well, observe what I command;
To-morrow, when the senate meets again,

Unfold the whole, unravel the deceit;
Start not, my lord—This must and shall be done!
Or here our friendship ends—Howe'er disguis'd,
Whatever thy pretence, thou art a traitor.

Sif. I should indeed deserve the name of traitor,
And ev'n a traitor's fate, had I so slightly,
From principles so weak, done what I did,
As e'er to disavow it—

Tan. Ha!

Sif. My liege,
Expect not this—Though practis'd long in courts,
I have not so far learn'd their subtle trade,
To veer obedient with each gust of passion.
I honour thee, I venerate thy orders,
But honour more my duty. Nought on earth
Shall ever shake me from that solid rock,
Nor smiles, nor frowns.—

Tan. You will not then?

Sif. I cannot.

Tan. Away! be gone!—Oh, my Rodolpho, come,
And save me from this traitor! Hence, I say.
No reply! Away! [*Exit Siffredi.*]

Re-enter RODOLPHO.

Rod. What can incense my prince so highly
Against his friend Siffredi?

Tan. Friend, Rodolpho!
When I have told thee what this friend has done,
How play'd me like a boy, a base-born wretch,
Who had nor heart nor spirit, thou wilt stand
Amaz'd, and wonder at my stupid patience.

Rod. Nothing so mean
As weak, insulted power, that dares not punish.
And how would that have suited with your love;
His daughter present too? Trust me, your conduct,
Howe'er abhorrent to a heart like yours,
Was fortunate and wise—Not that I mean
E'er to advise submission—

Tan. Heav'ns! submission—
Could I descend to bear it, ev'n in thought,

Despise me, you, the world, and Sigismunda!
Submission!—No!—To-morrow's glorious light
Shall flash discovery on the scene of baseness.
Whatever be the risk, by heav'ns, to-morrow,
I will o'erturn the dirty, lie-built schemes
Of these old men, and show my faithful senate,
That Manfred's son knows to assert and wear,
With undiminish'd dignity, that crown
This unexpected day has plac'd upon him.
But this, my friend, these stormy gusts of pride
Are foreign to my love—Till Sigismunda
Be disabus'd, my breast is tumult all,
And can obey no settled course of reason.
I see her still, I feel her pow'ful image,
That look, where with reproach complaint was mix'd,
Big with soft woe, and gentle indignation,
Which seem'd at once to pity and to scorn me——
Oh, let me find her! I too long have left
My Sigismunda to converse with tears,
A prey to thoughts that picture me a villain.
But ah! how, clogg'd with this accursed state,
A tedious world, shall I now find access?
Her father too—Ten thousand horrors crowd
Into the wild, fantastic eye of love——
Who knows what he may do? Come then, my friend,
And by thy sister's hand, oh, let me steal
A letter to her bosom—I no longer
Can bear her absence, by the just contempt
She now must brand me with, inflam'd to madness.
Fly, my Rodolpho, fly! engage thy sister
To aid my letter. And this very evening
Secure an interview—I would not bear
This rack another day, not for my kingdom.
Till then, deep plung'd in solitude and shades,
I will not see the hated face of man.
Thought drives on thought, on passions passions roll;
Her smiles alone can calm my raging soul. [Exit.

ACT THE THIRD.



SCENE I. *A Chamber.*

SIGISMUNDA *alone, sitting in a disconsolate Posture.*

Sig. Ah, tyrant prince! ah, more than faithless Tancred!

Ungen'rous and inhuman in thy falsehood!
Hadst thou this morning, when my hopeless heart,
Submissive to my fortune and my duty,
Had so much spirit left, as to be willing
To give thee back thy vows, ah! hadst thou then
Confess'd the sad necessity thy state
Impos'd upon thee, and with gentle friendship,
Since we must part at last, our parting soften'd;
I should indeed—I should have been unhappy,
But not to this extreme—

Is there, kind heav'n, no constancy in man?
No steadfast truth, no gen'rous, fix'd affection,
That can bear up against a selfish world?
No, there is none—Ev'n Tancred is inconstant!

[*Rises.*

Hence! let me fly this scene!—Whate'er I see,

These roofs, these walls, each object that surrounds me,
Are tainted with his vows—But whither fly?
The groves are worse, the soft retreat of Belmont,
Its deep'ning glooms, gay lawns, and airy summits,
Will wound my busy memory to torture,
And all its shades will whisper—faithless Tancred!—
My father comes—How, sunk in this disorder,
Shall I sustain his presence?

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. Sigismunda,
My dearest child! I grieve to find thee thus
A prey to tears.
Awake to reason from this dream of love,
And show the world thou art Siffredi's daughter.

Sig. Alas! I am unworthy of that name.

Sif. Thou art indeed to blame; thou hast too rashly
Engag'd thy heart, without a father's sanction.
But this I can forgive; and if thy heart
Will now resume its pride, assert itself,
And greatly rise superior to this trial,
I to my warmest confidence again
Will take thee, and esteem thee more my daughter.

Sig. Oh, you are gentler far than I deserve!
It is, it ever was, my darling pride,
To bend my soul to your supreme commands,
Your wisest will; and though by love betray'd—
Alas! and punish'd too—I have transgress'd
The nicest bounds of duty, yet I feel
A sentiment of tenderness, a source
Of filial nature springing in my breast,
That, should it kill me, shall control this passion,
And make me all submission and obedience
To you, my honour'd lord, the best of fathers.

Sif. Come to my arms, thou comfort of my age!
Thou only joy and hope of these grey hairs!
Come, let me take thee to a parent's heart;
There, with the kindly aid of my advice,
Ev'n with the dew of these paternal tears,
Revive and nourish this becoming spirit—

Then thou dost promise me, my Sigismunda—
Thy father stoops to make it his request—
Thou wilt resign thy fond, presumptuous hopes,
And henceforth never more indulge one thought
That in the light of love regards the king!

Sig. Hopes I have none!—Those by this fatal day
Are blasted all—But from my soul to banish,
While weeping mem'ry there retains her seat,
Thoughts which the purest bosom might have cherish'd,
Once my delight, now ev'n in anguish charming,
Is more, my lord, than I can promise.

Sif. Absence and time, the soft'ner of our passions,
Will conquer this. Mean time, I hope from thee
A great, a gen'rous effort; that thou wilt now
Exert thy utmost force, nor languish thus
Beneath the vain extravagance of love.
Let not thy father blush to hear it said,
His daughter was so weak, e'er to admit
A thought so void of reason, that a king
Should to his rank, his honour, and his glory,
The high, important duties of a throne,
Ev'n to his throne itself, madly prefer
A wild, romantic passion, the fond child
Of youthful, dreaming thought and vacant hours;
That he should quit his heav'n-appointed station,
Desert his awful charge, the care of all.—
What, must for thee,

To make thee blest, Sicilia be unhappy?
Rouse thee, for shame! and if a spark of virtue
Lies slumb'ring in thy soul, bid it blaze forth;
Nor sink unequal to the glorious lesson,
This day thy lover gave thee from his throne.

Sig. Ah that was not from virtue!—Had, my father,
That been his aim, I yield to what you say.
Why did you drag me to a sight so cruel?

Sif. It was a scene to fire thy emulation.

Sig. It was a scene of perfidy!—But know,
I will do more than imitate the king—
For he is false!—I, though sincerely pierc'd
With the best, truest passion, ever touch'd

A virgin's breast, here vow to heav'n and you,
Though from my heart I cannot, from my hopes
To cast this prince—What would you more, my father?

Sif. Yes, one thing more—thy father then is happy—
This world from thee, my honour and thy own,
Demands one step; a step, by which, convinc'd,
The king may see thy heart disdains to wear
A chain which his has greatly thrown aside.
But above all, thou must root out for ever
From the king's breast the least remain of hope,
And henceforth make his mention'd love dishonour.
These things, my daughter, that must needs be done,
Can but this way be done—by the safe refuge,
The sacred shelter of a husband's arms.
And there is one—

Sig. Good heav'ns! what means my lord?

Sif. One of illustrious family, high rank,
Yet still of higher dignity and merit,
Who can and will protect thee; one to awe
The king himself—Nay, hear me, Sigismunda—
The noble Osmond courts thee for his bride,
And has my plighted word—This day—

Sig. [*Kneels*] My father!

Let me with trembling arms embrace thy knees!
Oh, if you ever wish to see me happy;
If e'er in infant years I gave you joy,
When, as I prattling twin'd around your neck,
You snatch'd me to your bosom, kiss'd my eyes,
And melting said you saw my mother there;
Oh, save me from that worst severity
Of fate! Oh, outrage not my breaking heart
To that degree!—I cannot!—'tis impossible!—
So soon withdraw it, give it to another—
Or I shall die, shall, by the sudden change,
Be to distraction shock'd—Let me wear out
My hapless days in solitude and silence,
Far from the malice of a prying world;
At least—you cannot sure refuse me this—
Give me a little time—I will do all,
All I can do, to please you!

Sig. My daughter! you abuse
The softness of my nature—

Sig. Here, my father,
Till you relent, here will I grow for ever!

Sig. Rise, Sigismunda.—Though you touch my heart
Nothing can shake th' inexorable dictates
Of honour, duty, and determin'd reason.
Then by the holy ties of filial love,

Resolve, I charge thee, to receive earl Osmond,
As suits the man who is thy father's choice,
And worthy of thy hand—I go to bring him—

Sig. Spare me, my dearest father!

Sig. I must rush
From her soft grasp, or nature will betray me! [*Aside.*
Quit me, my child!

Sig. You cannot, oh, my father!
You cannot leave me thus!

Sig. Come hitber, Laura,
Come to thy friend. Now show thyself a friend.
Combat her weakness, dissipate her tears,
Cherish, and reconcile her to her duty. [*Exit.*

Enter LAURA.

Sig. Oh, woe on woe! distress'd by love and duty!
Oh, ev'ry way unhappy Sigismunda!

Lau. Forgive me, madam, if I blame your grief.
How can you waste your tears on one so false?
Unworthy of your tenderness; to whom
Nought but contempt is due and indignation?

Sig. You know not half the horrors of my fate!
I might perhaps have learn'd to scorn his falsehood;
Nay, when the first sad burst of tears was past,
I might have rous'd my pride and scorn'd himself—
But 'tis too much, this greatest, last misfortune—
Oh, whither shall I fly? Where hide me, Laura,
From the dire scene my father now prepares?

Lau. What thus alarms you, madam?

Sig. Can it be?

Can I—ah, no!—at once give to another
My violated heart? in one wild moment!

He brings earl Osmond to receive my vows.

Oh, dreadful change! for Tancred, haughty Osmond.

Lau. Now, on my soul, 'tis what an outrag'd heart
Like yours should wish!—I should, by heav'n's, esteem it
Most exquisite revenge!

Sig. Revenge! on whom?

On my own heart, already but too wretched!

Lau. On him! this Tancred! who has basely sold,
For the dull form of despicable grandeur,
His faith, his love!—At once a slave and tyrant!

Sig. Oh, rail at me, at my believing folly,
My vain, ill-founded hopes, but spare him, Laura.

Lau. Who rais'd these hopes? who triumphs o'er that
weakness?

Pardon the word—You greatly merit him;
Better than him, with all his giddy pomp;
You rais'd him by your smiles when he was nothing.
Where is your woman's pride, that guardian spirit
Giv'n us to dash the peridy of man?

Ye pow'rs! I cannot bear the thought with patience—
Before the public thus, before your father,
By an irrevocable, solemn deed,
With such inhuman scorn, to throw you from him:
To give his faithless hand, yet warm from thine,
With complicated meanness, to Constantia.
And to complete his crime, when thy weak limbs
Could scarce support thee, then, of thee regardless,
To lead her off,

Sig. That was indeed a sight.

To poison love; to turn it into rage
And keen contempt.—What means this stupid weakness
That hangs upon me? Hence, unworthy tears
Disgrace my cheek no more! No more, my heart,
For one so coolly false or meanly fickle,
Dare to suggest

The least excuse! Yes, traitor, I will wring
Thy pride, will turn thy triumph to confusion!
Sicilia's daughters
Shall wond'ring see in me a great example
Of one who punish'd an ill-judging heart,

Who made it bow to what it most abhorr'd!
Crush'd it to misery! for having thus
So lightly listen'd to a worthless lover!

Lau. At last it mounts, the kindling pride of virtue;
Trust me, thy marriage will embitter ~~his~~—

Sig. Oh, may the furies light his nuptial torch!
Be it accurs'd as mine! for the fair peace,
The tender joys of hymeneal love,
May jealousy awak'd, and fell remorse,
Pour all their fiercest venom through his breast!—
Where the fates lead, and blind revenge, I follow.—
Let me not think—By injur'd love! I vow,
Thou shalt, base prince! perfidious and inhuman!
Thou shalt behold me in another's arms;
In his thou hatest! Osmond's!

Lau. Ay, that will sting
His soul to madness.
Your cooler thought besides will of the change
Approve, and think it happy.

Sig. Talk not of Osmond, but perfidious Tancred!
Rail at him, rail! invent new names of scorn!
Assist me, Laura, lend my rage fresh fuel;
Support my stagg'ring purpose, which already
Begins to fail me—Ah, my vaunts how vain!
How have I ly'd to my own heart!—Alas,
My tears return, the mighty flood o'erwhelms me!

Lau. If thy own peace and honour cannot keep
Thy resolution fix'd, yet, Sigismunda,
Oh, think how deeply, how beyond retreat,
Thy father is engag'd.

Sig. Ah, wretched weakness!
That thus enthrals my soul;
And have I then no tears for thee, my father?
Can I forget thy cares, from helpless years,
Thy tenderness for me? Shall I for these
Repay thy stooping, venerable age
With shame, disquiet, anguish, and dishonour?
It must not be!—Thou first of angels! come,
Sweet filial piety, and firm my breast!
Yes, let one daughter to her fate submit,

Be nobly wretched—but her father happy!—
Laura!—they come! Oh, heav'n, I cannot stand
The horrid trial!—Open, open earth!
And hide me from their view.

Lau. Madam.

Re-enter SIFFREDI, with OSMOND.

Sif. My daughter,
Behold my noble friend who courts thy hand,
And whom to call my son I shall be proud.

Osm. Think not, I presume,
Madam, on this your father's kind consent,
To make me blest. I love you from a heart,
That seeks your good superior to my own;
And will by ev'ry art of tender friendship,
Consult your dearest welfare. May I hope,
Yours does not disavow your father's choice?

Sig. I am a daughter, sir—and have no pow'r
O'er my own heart—I die—Support me, Laura.

[Faints.]

Sif. Help—Bear her off—She breathes—my daughter!

Sig. Oh,

Forgive my weakness—soft—my Laura, lead me—
To my apartment. *[Exeunt Sigismunda and Laura.]*

Sif. Pardon me, my lord,
If by this sudden accident alarm'd,
I leave you for a moment.

[Exit.]

Osm. Let me think—

What can this mean?—Is it to me aversion?

Or is it, as I fear'd, she loves another?

Ha!—yes—perhaps the king, the young count Tancred,

They were bred up together—Surely that,

That cannot be—Has he not giv'n his hand,

In the most solemn manner, to Constantia?

Does not his crown depend upon the deed?

What is it then? I care not what it be.

My honour new, my dignity demands,

That my propos'd alliance, by her father,

And ev'n herself accepted, be not scorn'd.

I love her too—I never knew till now

To what a pitch I love her. Oh, she shot
Ten thousand charms into my inmost soul!
She look'd so mild, so amiably gentle,
She bow'd her head, she glow'd with such confusion,
Such loveliness of modesty! She is,
In gracious mind, in manners, and in person,
The perfect model of all female beauty!
She must be mine—She is!—If yet her heart
Consents not to my happiness, her duty,
Join'd to my tender cares, will gain so much
Upon her gen'rous nature—That will follow.
The man of sense, who acts a prudent part,
Not flatt'ring steals, but forms himself the heart.

[Exit.]

ACT THE FOURTH.



SCENE I. *The Garden belonging to SIFFREDI's House.*

Enter SIGISMUNDA and LAURA. SIGISMUNDA with a Letter in her Hand.

Sig. 'Tis done!—I am a slave!—The fatal vow
Has pass'd my lips!—Methought in those sad moments,
The tombs around, the saints, the darken'd altar,
And all the trembling shrines with horror shook.
But here is still new matter of distress.

Oh, Tancred, cease to persecute me more!
Oh, grudge me not some calmer state of woe;
Some quiet gloom to shade my hopeless days,
Where I may never hear of love and thee!—
Has Laura too conspir'd against my peace?
Why did you take this letter?—Bear it back—
I will not court new pain. [Gives her the Letter.

Lau. Madam, Rodolpho
Urg'd me so much, nay, ev'n with tears conjur'd me,
But this once more to serve th' unhappy king—
For such he said he was—that though enrag'd,

Equal with thee, at his inhuman falsehood,
 I could not to my brother's fervent pray'rs
 Refuse this office—Read it—His excuses
 Will only more expose his falsehood.

Sig. No:

It suits not Osmond's wife to read one line
 From that contagious hand—she knows too well!

Lau. He paints him out distress'd beyond expression,
 Ev'n on the point of madness.

He dies to see you, and to clear his faith.

Sig. Save me from that!—That would be worse than
 all!

Lau. I but report my brother's words; who then
 Began to talk of some dark imposition,
 That had deceiv'd us all; when interrupted,
 We heard your father and earl Osmond near,
 As summon'd to Constantia's court they went.

Sig. Ha! imposition?—Well, if I am doom'd
 To be, o'er all my sex, the wretch of love,
 In vain I would resist—Give me the letter—
 To know the worst is some relief—Alas,
 It was not thus, with such dire palpitations,
 That, Tancred, once I us'd to read thy letters.

[Attempts to read the Letter, but gives it to Laura.
 Ah, fond remembrance blinds me!—Read it, Laura.

Lau. [Reads] Deliver me, Sigismunda, from that
 most exquisite misery which a faithful heart can suffer
 —to be thought base by her, from whose esteem even
 virtue borrows new charms. When I submitted to my
 cruel situation, it was not falsehood you beheld, but an
 excess of love. Rather than endanger that, I for awhile
 gave up my honour. Every moment till I see you stabs
 me with severer pangs than real guilt itself can feel.
 Let me then conjure you to meet me in the garden, to-
 wards the close of the day, when I will explain this mys-
 tery. We have been most inhumanly abused; and that
 by the means of the very paper which I gave you, from
 the warmest sincerity of love, to assure to you the heart
 and hand of

TANCRED.

Sig. There, Laura, there, the dreadful secret sprung!

That paper! ah, that paper! it suggests
A thousand horrid thoughts—I to my father
Gave it! and he perhaps—I dare not cast
A look that way—If yet indeed you love me,
Oh, blast me not, kind Tancred, with the truth!
Oh, pitying keep me ignorant for ever.
What strange, peculiar misery is mine?
Reduc'd to wish the man I love were false!

Lau. Madam,
Behold he comes—the king—

Sig. Heav'ns! how escape?

No—I will stay—This one last meeting—Leave me.

[Exit Laura.]

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. And are these long, long hours of torture past!
My life! my Sigismunda? *[Throws himself at her Feet.]*

Sig. Rise, my lord.

To see my sov'reign thus no more becomes me.

Tan. Oh, let me kiss the ground on which you tread!
Let me exhale my soul in softest transport!

Since I again behold my Sigismunda! *[Rises.]*

Unkind! how couldst thou ever deem me false?

How thus dishonour love? After the vows,
The fervent truth, the tender protestations,
Which mine has often pour'd, to let thy breast,
Whate'er th' appearance was, admit suspicion?

Sig. How! when I heard myself your full consent
To the late king's so just and prudent will?
Heard it before you read, in solemn senate?
When I beheld you give your royal hand,
To her, whose birth and dignity of right
Demands that high alliance? Yes, my lord,
You have done well. The man whom heav'n appoints
To govern others, should himself first learn
To bend his passions to the sway of reason.
In all, you have done well; but when you bid
My humbled hopes look up to you again,
And sooth'd with wanton cruelty my weakness—
That too was well—My vanity deserv'd
The sharp rebuke.

Tan. Chide on, chide on. Thy soft reproaches now,
Instead of wounding, only sooth my fondness.
No, no, thou charming consort of my soul!
I never lov'd thee with such faithful ardour,
As in that cruel, miserable moment
You thought me false.

It was thy barb'rous father, Sigismunda,
Who caught me in the toil. He turn'd that paper,
Meant for th' assuring bond of nuptial love,
To ruin it for ever; he, he wrote
That forg'd consent, you heard, beneath my name.
Had he not been thy father—Ha! my love!
You tremble, you grow pale!

Sig. Oh, leave me, Tancred!

Tan. No!—Leave thee!—Never! never till you set
My heart at peace, till these dear lips again
Pronounce thee mine! Without thee, I renounce
Myself, my friends, the world—Here on this hand—

Sig. My lord, forget that hand, which never now
Can be to thine united—

Tan. Sigismunda!
What dost thou mean?

Sig. Inquire no more—I never can be thine.

Tan. What, who shall interpose? Who dares attempt
To brave the fury of an injur'd king,
Who, ere he sees thee ravish'd from his hopes,
Will wrap all blazing Sicily in flames?—

Sig. In vain your pow'r, my lord—'Tis fatal error,
Join'd to my father's unrelenting will,
Has plac'd an everlasting bar betwixt us—
I am—earl Osmond's—wife.

Tan. Earl Osmond's wife!—

[After a long Pause, during which they look at one another with the highest Agitation, and most tender Distress.]

Heav'ns! did I hear thee right? What! marry'd? marry'd!

Lost to thy faithful Tancred? lost for ever!
Couldst thou then doom me to such matchless woe,
Without so much as hearing me?—Distraction!—

Alas! what hast thou done? Ah, Sigismunda!
Thy rash credulity has done a deed,
Which, of two happiest lovers that e'er felt
The blissful pow'r, has made two finish'd wretches!
But—madness!—Sure thou know'st it cannot be!
This hand is mine! a thousand thousand vows—

Enter OSMOND.

Osm. [*Snatches her Hand from the King*] Madam,
this hand, by the most solemn rites,
A little hour ago, was giv'n to me,
And did not sov'reign honour now command me,
Never but with my life to quit my claim,
I would renounce it—thus!

Tan. Ha, who art thou?
Presumptuous man!

Sig. [*Aside*] Where is my father? Heav'ns! [*Exit.*

Osm. One thou shouldst better know—Yes—view
me, one
Who can and will maintain his rights and honour,
Against a faithless prince, an upstart king,
Whose first base deed is what a harden'd tyrant
Would blush to act.

Tan. Insolent Osmond! know,
This upstart king will hurl confusion on thee,
And all who shall invade his sacred rights,
Prior to thine—thine, founded on compulsion,
On infamous deceit!—I will annul,
By the high pow'r with which the laws invest me,
Those guilty forms in which you have entrapp'd,
My queen betroth'd, who has my heart, my hand,
And shall partake my throne—If, haughty lord,
If this thou didst not know, then know it now;
And know, besides, as I have told thee this,
Shouldst thou but think to urge thy treason further—
Thy life shall answer for it.

Osm. Ha! my life!—
It moves my scorn to hear thy empty threats.
When was it that a Norman baron's life
Became so vile, as on the frown of kings

To hang?—Of that, my lord, the law must judge:
Or if the law be weak, my guardian sword——

Tan. Dare not to touch it, traitor, lest my rage
Break loose, and do a deed that misbecomes me.

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. My gracious lord, what is it I behold!
My sov'reign in contention with his subjects?
Surely this house deserves from royal Tancred
A little more regard, than to be made
A scene of trouble, and unseemly jars.
Heavens! can your highness
From your exalted character descend,
Unkindly thus disturb the sweet repose,
The secret peace of families, for which
Alone the free-born race of man to laws
And government submitted?

Tan. My lord Siffredi,
Spare thy rebuke. The duties of my station
Are not to me unknown. But thou, old man,
Dost thou not blush to talk of rights invaded;
And of our best our dearest bias disturb'd?
Thou, who with more than barbarous perfidy
Hast trampled all allegiance, justice, truth,
Humanity itself, beneath thy feet?
Thou know'st thou hast—I could, to thy confusion,
Return thy hard reproaches; but I spare thee
Before this lord, for whose ill-sorted friendship
Thou hast most basely sacrific'd thy daughter.
Farewell, my lord.—For thee, lord constable,
Who dost presume to lift thy surly eye
To my soft love, my gentle Sigismunda,
I once again command thee on thy life——
Yes—chew thy rage—but mark me—on thy life,
No farther urge thy arrogant pretensions! *[Exit.*

Osm. Ha! Arrogant pretensions! Heaven and earth!
What! arrogant pretensions to my wife?
My wedded wife! Where are we? in a land
Of civil rule, of liberty and laws?——
Not, on my life, pursue them?—Giddy prince!

My life disdains thy nod. It is the gift
Of parent heaven, who gave me too an arm,
Aspirant to defend it against tyrants.
Mine is a common cause. My arm shall guard,
Mix'd with my own, the rights of each Sicilian;
Ere to thy tyrant rage they fall a prey,
I shall find means to shake thy tottering throne,
And crush thee in the ruins!—
Constantia is my queen!

Sif. Lord constable,
Let us be stedfast in the right; but let us
Act with cool prudence, and with manly temper,
As well as manly firmness. Remember that my house
Protects my daughter still; and ere I saw her
Thus ravish'd from us, by the arm of power,
This hand should act the Roman father's part.
Fear not; be temperate; all will yet be well.
I know the king.—Trust me, to reason
He will return.

Osm. He will!—By heavens, he shall!—
You know the king—I wish, my lord Siffredi,
That you had deign'd to tell me all you knew—
And would you have me wait, with dutious patience,
Till he return to reason? Ye just powers!
When he has planted on our necks his foot,
And trod us into slaves; when his vain pride
Is cloy'd with our submission;
No, no, my lord! there is a nobler way,
To teach the blind oppressive fury reason:
Oft has the lustre of avenging steel
Unseal'd her stupid eyes—The sword is reason!

Enter RODOLPHO, with Guards.

Rod. My lord high constable of Sicily,
In the king's name, and by his special order,
I here arrest you prisoner of state.

Osm. What king? I know no king of Sicily,
Unless he be the husband of Constantia.

Rod. Then knew him now—behold his royal orders
To bear you to the castle of Palermo.

Sif. Let the big torrent foam its madness off.
Submit, my lord—No castle long can hold
Our wrongs—This, more than friendship or alliance,
Confirms me thine; this binds me to thy fortunes,
By the strong tie of common injury,
Which nothing can dissolve—I grieve, Rodolpho,
To see the reign in such unhappy sort
Begin.

Osm. The reign! the usurpation call it!
This meteor king may blaze awhile, but soon
Must spend his idle terrors—sir, lead on—
Farewell, my lord—more than my life and fortune,
Remember well, is in your hands—my honour!

Sif. Our honour is the same. My son, farewell—
We shall not long be parted. On these eyes
Sleep shall not shed his balm, till I behold thee
Restor'd to freedom, or partake thy bonds. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.



SCENE I. *A Chamber.*

Enter SIFFREDI.

Sif. The prospect lowers around. I found the king,
Though calm'd a little, with subsiding tempest,
As suits his generous nature, yet in love
Abated nought, most ardent in his purpose;
Inexorably fix'd, whate'er the risk,
To claim my daughter, and dissolve this marriage—
I have embark'd, upon a perilous sea,
A mighty treasure.
Bear witness, heaven! thou mind-inspecting eye!
My breast is pure. I have prefer'd my duty,
The good and safety of my fellow-subjects,
To all those views that fire the selfish race
Of mortal men, and mix them in eternal broils.

Enter an Officer belonging to SIFFREDI.

Offi. My lord, a man of noble port, his face
Wrapt in disguise, is earnest for admission.

Sif. Go, bid him enter——

[*Exit Officer.*]

Ha! wrapp'd in disguise!
And at this late unseasonable hour!
Who can it be?

Enter OSMOND, discovering himself.

Sif. Earl Osmond, you?—Welcome, once more,
To this glad roof!—But why in this disguise?
Would I could hope the king exceeds his promise!
I have his faith, soon as to-morrow's sun
Shall gild Sicilia's cliffs, you shall be free.—
Has some good angel turn'd his heart to justice?

Osm. It is not by the favour of count Tancred
That I am here. As much I scorn his favour,
As I defy his tyranny and threats—
Our friend Goffredo, who commands the castle,
On my parole, ere dawn to render back
My person, has permitted me this freedom.
Know then, the faithless outrage of to-day,
By him committed whom you call the king,
Has rous'd Constantia's court. Our friends, the friends
Of virtue, justice, and of public faith,
Ripe for revolt, are in high ferment all.
I thence of you, as guardian of the laws,
As guardian of this will, to you entrusted,
Desire, nay more, demand your instant aid,
To see it put in vig'rous execution.

Sif. You cannot doubt, my lord, of my concurrence.
Who more than I have labour'd this great point?
'Tis my own plan; and if I drop it now,
I should be justly branded with the shame
Of rash advice, or despicable weakness.
But let us not precipitate the matter.
Constantia's friends are numerous and strong;
Yet Tancred's, trust me, are of equal force:
E'er since the secret of his birth was known,
The people are all in a tumult harl'd,
Of boundless joy—Oh, if our prating virtue
Dwells not in words alone—Oh, let us join,
My generous Osmond, to avert these woes,
And yet sustain our tott'ring Norman kingdom!

Osm. But how, Siffredi, how?—If by soft means
We can maintain our rights, and save our country,
May his unnatural blood first stain the sword,
Who with unpitying fury first shall draw it!

Sif. I have a thought—The glorious work be thine.
Suppose my daughter, to her God devoted,
Were plac'd within some convent's sacred verge,
Beneath the dread protection of the altar——

Osm. Ere then, by heavens! I would
Turn whining monk myself,
And pray incessant for the tyrant's safety.——
What! How! because an insolent invader,
A sacrilegious tyrant, demands my wife;
What! shall I tamely yield her up,
Even in the manner you propose?—Oh, then
I were supremely vile! degraded! sham'd!
The scorn of manhood! and abhorr'd of honour!

Sif. There is, my lord, an honour, the calm child
Of reason, of humanity, and mercy,
Superior far to this punctilious demon,
That singly minds itself, and oft embroils
With proud barbarian niceties the world.

Osm. My lord, my lord, I cannot brook your prudence;
It holds a pulse unequal to my blood——
Unblemish'd honour is the flower of virtue!
The vivifying soul! and he who slights it,
Will leave the other dull and lifeless dross.

Sif. No more—You are too warm.

Osm. You are too cool.

Sif. Too cool, my lord? I were indeed too cool,
Not to resent this language, and to tell thee—
I wish earl Osmond were as cool as I
To his own selfish bliss—ay, and as warm
To that of others—But of this no more—
My daughter is thy wife—I gave her to thee,
And will, against all force, maintain her thine.
But think not I will catch thy headlong passions,
Whirl'd in a blaze of madness o'er the land;
Or, till the last extremity compel me,

Risk the dire means of war—The king, to-morrow,
Will set you free; and, if by gentle means
He does not yield my daughter to your arms,
And wed Constantia, as the will requires,
Why then expect me on the side of justice—
Let that suffice.

Osm. It does—Forgive my heat.
My rankled mind, by injuries inflam'd,
May be too prompt to take, and give offence.

Sif. 'Tis past—Your wrongs, I own, may well transport

The wisest mind—But henceforth, noble Osmond,
Do me more justice, honour more my truth,
Nor mark me with an eye of squint suspicion—
Return, my son, and from your friend Goffredo
Release your word. There try, by soft repose,
To calm your breast.

Osm. Bid the vex'd ocean sleep,
Swept by the pinions of the raging north—
But your frail age, by care and toil exhausted,
Demands the balm of all-repairing rest.

Sif. Soon as to-morrow's dawn shall streak the skies,
I, with my friends in solemn state assembled,
Will to the palace, and demand your freedom.
Then by calm reason, or by higher means,
The king shall quit his claim, and in the face
Of Sicily, my daughter shall be yours.
Farewell.

Osm. My lord, good night. [Exit Siffredi.]

[After a long pause] I like him not—
Yes—I have mighty matter of suspicion.
My honour is not safe, while here my wife
Remains—Who knows but he this very night
May bear her to some convent, as he mention'd—
The king too—though I smother'd up my rage,
I mark'd it well—will set me free to-morrow.
Why not to-night? He has some dark design—
By heav'n's, he has!—I am abus'd most grossly;
Made the vile tool of this old statesman's schemes;
I will not wait his crawling timid motions,

I will convince him that earl Osmond never
 Was forc'd to be his dupe—I will bear her off
 This night, and lodge her in a place of safety:
 I have a trusty band that waits not far.
 Hence! let me lose no time—One rapid moment
 Should ardent form, at once, and execute
 A bold design—'Tis fix'd—The mine is laid,
 And only wants my kindling touch to spring. [Exit.

SCENE II. SIGISMUNDA'S Apartment.

Thunder. SIGISMUNDA and LAURA discovered.

Lau. Heaven's! 'tis a fearful night!

Sig. Ah! the black rage

Of midnight tempest, or th' assuring smiles
 Of radiant morn, are equal all to me.
 Nought now has charms or terrors to my breast,
 The seat of stupid woe!—Leave me, my Laura.
 Kind rest perhaps may hush my woes a little.
 Oh, for that quiet sleep that knows no morning!

Lau. Madam, indeed I know not how to go.

Indulge my fondness—Let me watch awhile
 By your sad bed, 'till these dread hours shall pass.

Sig. Alas! what is the toil of elements, [Thunder.
 This idle perturbation of the sky,
 To what I feel within?—Oh, that the fires
 Of pitying heaven would point their fury here!
 Good night, my dearest Laura.

Lau. Oh, I know not

What this oppression means—But 'tis with pain,
 With tears, I can persuade myself to leave you—
 Well then—Good night, my dearest Sigismunda.

[Exit.

Sig. And am I then alone?—The most undone,
 Most wretched being now beneath the cope
 Of this affrighting gloom that wraps the world—
 I said I did not fear—Ah, me! I feel
 A shiv'ring horror run through all my powers!
 Oh, I am nought but tumult, fears, and weakness!
 And yet how idle fear, when hope is gone,

Gone, gone for ever!—Oh, thou gentle scene.

[*Looking towards her Bed.*

Of sweet repose, where, by the oblivious draught

Of each sad toilsome day, to peace restor'd

Unhappy mortals lose their woes awhile,

Thou hast no peace for me!—What shall I do?

How pass this dreadful night, so big with terror?—

Here, with the midnight shades, here will I sit,

[*Sitting down.*

A prey to dire despair, and ceaseless weep

The hours away—Bless me—I heard a noise——

[*Starting up.*

No—I mistook—nothing but silence reigns

And awful midnight round—Again!—Oh, heavens!

My lord the king!

Enter TANCRED.

Tan. Be not alarm'd, my love!

Sig. My royal lord, why at this midnight hour,
How came you hither?

Tan. By that secret way

My love contriv'd, when we, in happier days,

Us'd to devote these hours, so much in vain,

To vows of love, and everlasting friendship.

Sig. Why will you thus persist to add new stings
To her distress, who never can be thine?

Oh, fly me! fly! you know——

Tan. I know too much.

Oh, how I could reproach thee, Sigismunda!

Pour out my injur'd soul in just complaints!

But now the time permits not, these swift moments——

I told thee how thy father's artifice

Forc'd me to seem perfidious in thy eyes.

Ever since—a dreadful interval of care!

My thoughts have been employ'd, not without hope,

How to defeat Siffredi's barb'rous purpose.

But thy credulity has ruin'd all,

Thy rash, thy wild—I know not what to name it——

Oh, it has prov'd the giddy hopes of man

To be delusion all, and sick'ning folly!

Sig. Ah, gen'rous Tancred! ah, thy truth destroys me!

Yes, yes, 'tis I, 'tis I alone am false!

My hasty rage, join'd to my tame submission,

More than the most exalted filial duty

Could e'er demand, has dash'd our cup of fate

With bitterness unequal'd—But, alas!

What are thy woes to mine?—to mine! just heaven!

Now is thy turn of vengeance—hate, renounce me!

Oh, leave me to the fate I well deserve,

To sink in hopeless misery!—at least,

Try to forget the worthless Sigismunda!

Tan. Forget thee! No! Thou art my soul itself!

I have no thought, no hope, no wish but thee!

Ah, how forget thee!—Much must be forgot,

Ere Tancred can forget his Sigismunda!

Sig. But you, my lord, must make that great effort.

Tan. Can Sigismunda make it?

Sig. Ah, I know not

With what success—But all that feeble woman

And love-entangled reason can perform,

I to the utmost will exert to do it.

Tan. Oh, barbarous Sigismunda!

And canst thou talk thus steadily; thus treat me

With such un pitying, unrelenting rigour?

Poor is the love, that rather than give up

A little pride, a little formal pride,

The breath of vanity, can bear to see

The man, whose heart was once so dear to thine,

By many a tender vow so mix'd together,

A prey to anguish, fury, and distraction!

Thou canst not surely make me such a wretch,

Thou canst not, Sigismunda!—Yet relent,

Oh, save us yet!—Rodolpho, with my guards,

Waits in the garden—Let us seize the moments

We ne'er may have again—With more than power

I will assert thee mine, with fairest honour.

The world shall ev'n approve; each honest bosom

Swell'd with a kindred joy to see us happy.

Sig. The world approve! what is the world to me?

The conscious mind is its own awful world.—
 And mine is fix'd—Distress me then no more;
 Not all the heart can plead (and it, alas,
 Pleads but too much)
 Shall ever shake th' unalterable dictates
 That tyrannise my breast.

Tan. 'Tis well—no more—

I yield me to my fate—Yes, yes, inhuman!
 Since thy barbarian heart is steel'd by pride,
 Shut up to love and pity, here behold me
 Cast on the ground, a vile and abject wretch!
 Lost to all cares, all dignities, all duties!
 Here will I grow, breathe out my faithful soul,
 Here at thy feet—Death, death alone shall part us!

Sig. Have you then vow'd to drive me to perdition!
 What can I more?—Yes, Tancred! once again
 I will forget the dignity my station
 Commands me to sustain—for the last time
 Will tell thee, that, I fear no ties, no duty,
 Can ever root thee from my hapless bosom.
 Oh, leave me! fly me! were it but in pity!—
 To see what once we tenderly have lov'd,
 Cut off from every hope—cut off for ever!
 Is pain thy generosity should spare me.
 Then rise, my lord; and if you truly love me,
 If you respect my honour, nay, my peace,
 Retire! for though th' emotions of my heart
 Can ne'er alarm my virtue; yet, alas!
 They tear it so, they pierce it with such anguish—
 Oh, 'tis too much!—I cannot bear the conflict!

Enter OSMOND.

Osm. Turn, tyrant, turn! and answer to my honour,
 For this thy base insufferable outrage!

Tan. Insolent traitor! think not to escape
 Thyself my vengeance! [*They fight, Osmond falls.*]

Sig. Help, here, help!—O heavens!

[*Throwing herself down by him.*]

Alas, my lord, what meant your headlong rage?
 'That faith, which I this day, upon the altar,

To you devoted, is unblemish'd, pure
As vestal truth; was resolutely yours,
Beyond the power of aught on earth to shake it.

Osm. Perfidious woman! die!—[*Shortening his Sword, he plunges it into her Breast*] and to the grave
Attend a husband, yet but half aveng'd!

Tan. Oh, horror! horror! execrable villain!

Osm. And, tyrant! thou!—thou shalt not o'er my
tomb

Exult—"Tis well—"Tis great!—I die content!— [*Dies.*

Enter RODOLPHO and LAURA.

Tan. [*Throwing himself down by Sig.*] Quick! here!
bring aid!—Ah, that gentle bosom
Pours fast the streams of life.

Sig. All aid is vain,
I feel the powerful hand of death upon me—
But, oh! it sheds a sweetness through my fate,
That I am thine again; and without blame
May in my Tancred's arms resign my soul!

Tan. Oh, death is in that voice! so gently mild,
So sadly sweet, as mixes even with mine
The tears of hovering angels!—Mine again!—
And is it thus the cruel fates have join'd us?
Are these the horrid nuptials they prepare
For love like ours?—Yes, death shall soon unite us.

Sig. Live, live, my Tancred!—Let my death suffice
To expiate all that may have been amiss.
May it appease the fates, avert their fury
From thy propitious reign!

Enter SIFFREDI, fixed in astonishment and grief.
My father!—Oh, how shall I lift my eyes
To thee, my sinking father?

Sif. Awful heaven!
I am chastis'd—My dearest child!—

Sig. Where am I?
A fearful darkness closes all around—
My friends! We needs must part—I must obey
Th' impetuous call—Farewell, my Laura!

Oh, my dear father, bow'd beneath the weight
Of age and grief—the victim ev'n of virtue,
Receive my last adieu!—Where art thou, Tancred?
Give me thy hand—But, ah—it cannot save me
From the dire king of terrors, whose cold pow'r
Creeps o'er my heart—Oh!

Tan. How these pangs distract me!
Oh, lift thy gracious eyes;—Thou leav'st me then!
Thou leav'st me, Sigismunda!

Sig. Yes—but thy love and tenderness for me,
Sure makes it needless—Harbour no resentment
Against my father; venerate his zeal,
That acted from a principle of goodness,
From faithful love to thee—Live, and maintain
My innocence embalm'd, with holiest care—
Preserve my spotless memory! Oh—I die—
Eternal Mercy take my trembling soul!
Oh, 'tis the only sting of death to part
From those we love—from thee—farewell, my Tancred!
[Dies.]

Tan. Thus then!

[Flies to his Sword, is held by Rodolpho.]

Rod. Hold, hold, my lord!—Have you forgot
Your Sigismunda's last request already?

Tan. Off! set me free! Think not to bind me down,
With barb'rous friendship, to the rack of life!
What hand can shut the thousand thousand gates
Which death still opens to the woes of mortals?—
I shall find means—No pow'r in earth or heav'n
Can force me to endure the hateful light,
Thus robb'd of all that lent it joy and sweetness!
Off, traitors, off! or my distracted soul
Will burst indignant from this gaol of nature,
To where she beckons yonder—No, mild seraph,
Point not to life—I cannot linger here,
Cut off from thee, the miserable pity,
The scorn of humankind!—A trampled king!
Who let his mean, poor-hearted love, one moment,
To coward prudence stoop! who made it not
The first undoubting action of his reign,

To snatch thee to his throne, and there to shield
Thy helpless bosom from a ruffian's fury!—
Oh, shame! Oh, agony! Oh, the fell stings
Of late, of vain repentance!—Ha, my brain
Is all on fire! a wild abyss of thought;
Th' infernal world discloses! See! Behold him!
Lo! with fierce smiles he shakes the bloody steel,
And mocks my feeble tears.—Hence, quickly hence!
Spurn his vile carcass! give it to the dogs!
Expose it to the winds and screaming ravens!
Or hurl it down that fiery steep to hell,
There with his soul to toss in flames for ever.
Ah, impotence of rage!

Rod. Preserve him, heaven!

Tan. What am I? Where?

Sad, silent, all?—The forms of dumb despair,
Around some mournful tomb.—What do I see?
'This soft abode of innocence and love
Turn'd to the house of death! a place of horror!
Ah, that poor corse! pale! pale! deform'd with murder!
Is that my Sigismunda? [*Throws herself down by her.*

Sif. [*After a pathetic pause, looking on the Scene before him*] Have I liv'd

To these enfeebled years, by heav'n reserv'd
To be a dreadful monument of justice?—

Taught hence, ye parents, who from nature stray,
And the great ties of social life betray;

Ne'er with your children act a tyrant's part:

'Tis yours to guide, not violate the heart.

Ye vainly wise, who o'er mankind preside,

Behold my righteous woes, and drop your pride;

Keep virtue's simple path before your eyes,

Nor think from evil good can ever rise. [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

CRAMM'D to the throat with wholesome moral stuff,
Alas, poor audience! you have had enough.
Was ever hapless heroine of a play
In such a piteous plight as ours to-day?
Was ever woman so by love betray'd?
Match'd with two husband's, and yet—die a maid.
But bless me!—hold—what sounds are these I hear?—
I see the Tragic Muse herself appear.

[The back Scene opens, and discovers a romantic sylvan Landscape, from which the Tragic Muse advances slowly to Music, and speaks the following Lines.]

Hence with your flippant epilogue, that tries
To wipe the virtuous tear from British eyes;
That dares my moral, tragie scene profane,
With strains—at best unsuiting, light, and vain.
Hence from the pure unsully'd beams that play
In yon fair eyes where virtue shines—away!

Britons, to you from chaste Castalian groves,
Where dwell the tender, oft unhappy loves;
Where shades of heroes roam, each mighty name,
And court my aid to rise again to fame;
To you I come, to freedom's noblest seat,
And in Britannia fix my last retreat.

In Greece and Rome I watch'd the public weal;
The purple tyrant trembled at my steel:
Nor did I less o'er private sorrows reign,
And mend the melting heart with softer pain.
On France and you then rose my bright'ning star,
With social ray—The arts are ne'er at war.
Oh, as your fire and genius strongly blazo,
As yours are gen'rous freedom's bolder lays,
Let not the Gallic taste leave yours behind,
In decent manners and in life refin'd;

Banish the motly mode, to tag low verse,
The langhing ballad to the mournful hearse.
When through five acts your hearts have learn'd to
 glow,
Touch'd with the sacred force of honest woe;
Oh, keep the dear impression on your breast,
Nor idly lose it for a wretched jest.

THE TENDER HUSBAND;

OR,
The Accomplished Fools.

A COMEDY.

BY SIR RICHARD STEELE.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

Author of several Dramatic Pieces, &c.



Printed at the Chiswick Press,

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1818.



THE TENDER HUSBAND.

DRURY Lane Theatre originally presented the town with this Comedy in the year 1705, when it was received with much applause. It may be presumed that Mr. Addison had a good opinion of it by his having presented the author with a prologue.

Moliere's *SICILIEN*, ou *L'Amour Peintre*, furnished the incident of *Clerimont's* disguising himself as an artist to paint the picture of his mistress.

The dialogue, as originally given, was a little more approaching to *grossièreté* than modern manners would allow; and even notwithstanding present retrenchments, too great an exuberance of fancy, and latitude of *double entendre* yet remain.



PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. ADDISON.

IN the first rise and infancy of farce,
When fools were many, and when plays were scarce,
The raw, unpractis'd authors could, with ease,
A young and unexperienc'd audience please:
No single character had e'er been shown,
But the whole herd of fops was all their own;
Rich in originals, they set to view,
In every piece, a coxcomb that was new.

But now our *British* theatre can boast
Drolls of all kinds, a vast unthinking host!
Fruitful of folly and of vice, it shows
Cuckolds, and oits, and bawds, and pimps, and beaux;
Rough country knights are found of every shire,
Of every fashion gentle fops appear;
And punks of different characters we meet,
As frequent on the stage as in the pit:
Our modern wits are forc'd to pick and cull,
And here and there, by chance, glean up a fool:
Long ere they find the necessary spark,
They search the town, and beat about the park:
To all his most frequented haunts resort,
Oft dog him to the ring, and oft to court;
As love of pleasure, or of place invites:
And sometimes catch him taking snuff at *White's*.

Howe'er, to do you right, the present age
Breeds very hopeful monsters for the stage,
That scorn the paths their dull forefathers trod,
And won't be blockheads in the common road.
Do but survey this crowded house to-night,
Here's still encouragement for those that write.

Our author, to divert his friends to-day,
Stocks with variety of fools his play;
And, that there may be something gay and new,
Two ladies-errant has exposed to view:
The first a damsel, travell'd in romance,
The t'other more refin'd; she comes from *France*:
Rescue, like courteous knights, the nymph from danger,
And kindly treat, like well-bred men, the stranger.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As acted at Drury Lane, 1787.

<i>Sir Harry Gubbin.</i>		<i>Mr. Baddeley.</i>
<i>Humphrey Gubbin</i>		<i>Mr. Dodd.</i>
<i>Mr. Tipkin</i>		<i>Mr. Parsons.</i>
<i>Clerimont, Senior.</i>		<i>Mr. Packer.</i>
<i>Captain Clerimont</i>		<i>Mr. Brereton.</i>
<i>Mr. Pounce</i>		<i>Mr. Aikin.</i>
<i>Mrs. Clerimont</i>		<i>Mrs. Ward.</i>
<i>Aunt</i>		<i>Mrs. Hopkins.</i>
<i>Niece</i>		<i>Miss Farron.</i>
<i>Fainlove</i>		<i>Mrs. Wells.</i>
<i>Jenny</i>		<i>Miss Tidswell.</i>

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. *The Park.*

Enter CLERIMONT, Senior, and FAINLOVE.

Cler. sen. **W**ELL, Mr. Fainlove, how do you go on in your amour with my wife?

Fain. I am very civil and very distant; if she smiles or speaks, I bow and gaze at her—then throw down my eyes, as if oppress'd by fear of offence, then steal a look again till she again sees me—This is my general method.

Cler. sen. And 'tis right—For such a fine lady has no guard to her virtue, but her pride; therefore you must constantly apply yourself to that—But dear Lucy, as you have been a very faithful, but a very costly wench to me; so my spouse also has been constant to my bed, but careless of my fortune.

Fain. Ah! my dear, how could you leave your poor Lucy, and run into France to see sights, and show your gallantry with a wife? Was not that unnatural?

Cler. sen. She brought me a noble fortune, and I thought she had a right to share it: therefore carried

her to see the world, forsooth, and make the tour of France and Italy, where she learned to lose her money gracefully, to admire every vanity in our sex, and condemn every virtue in her own; which, with ten thousand other perfections, are the ordinary improvements of a travell'd lady. Now I can neither mortify her vanity that I may live at ease with her, or quite discard her, till I have catch'd her a little enlarging her innocent freedoms, as she calls 'em: for this end I am content to be a French husband, though now and then with the secret pangs of an Italian one; and therefore, sir, or madam, you are thus equipt to attend and accost her ladyship: it concerns you to be diligent: if we wholly part—I need say no more; if we do not—I'll see thee well provided for.

Fain. I'll do all I can, I warrant you; but you are not to expect I'll go much among the men.

Cler. sen. No, no, you must not go near men, you are only (when my wife goes to a play) to sit in a side box with pretty fellows—I don't design you to personate a real man, you are only to be a pretty gentleman—Not to be of any use or consequence in the world, as to yourself, but merely as a property to others.—You must have seen many of that species.

Fain. I apprehend you, such as stand in assemblies, with an indolent softness and contempt of all around 'em; who make a figure in public, and are scorn'd in private. I have seen such a one with a pocket glass to see his own face, and an affected perspective to know others.

[Imitates each.

Cler. sen. Ay, ay, that's my man—Thou dear rogue.

Fain. Let me alone—I'll lay my life I'll horn you; that is, I'll make it appear I might if I could.

Cler. sen. Ay, that will please me quite as well.

Fain. To show you the progress I have made, I last night won of her five hundred pounds, which I have brought you safe.

[Giving him Bills.

Cler. sen. Oh the damn'd vice! That women can imagine all household care, regard to posterity, and fear of poverty, must be sacrificed to a game at cards—

Suppose she had not had it to pay, and you had been capable of finding your account another way——

Fain. That's but a suppose——

Cler. sen. I say, she must have complied with every thing you ask'd.

Fain. But she knows you never limit her expenses—I'll gain her from him for ever if I can—— [*Aside.*]

Cler. sen. With this you have repaid me two thousand pounds, and if you did not refund thus honestly, I could not have supplied her——We must have parted.

Fain. Then you shall part—if t'other way fails. [*Aside*] However, I can't blame your fondness of her, she has so many entertaining qualities with her vanity—Then she has such a pretty unthinking air, while she saunters round a room, and prattles sentences——

Cler. sen. That was her turn from her infancy; she always had a great genius for knowing every thing but what it was necessary she should——Thus the case stood when she went to France; but her fine follies improved so daily, that, though I was then proud of her being called Mr. Clerimont's wife, I am now as much out of countenance to hear myself called Mrs. Clerimont's husband, so much is the superiority of her side.

Fain. I am sure if ever I gave myself a little liberty, I never found you so indulgent.

Cler. sen. I should have the whole sex on my back, should I pretend to retrench a lady so well visited as mine is——Therefore I must bring it about that it shall appear her own act, if she reforms; or else I shall be pronounced jealous, and have my eyes pull'd out for being open——But I hear my brother Jack coming, who, I hope, has brought yours with him——Hist, not a word.

Enter CAPTAIN CLERIMONT and POUNCE.

Capt. C. I have found him out at last, brother, and brought you the obsequious Mr. Pounce. I saw him at a distance in a crowd, whispering in their turns with all about him——He is a gentleman so received, so courted, and so trusted——

Pounce. I am very glad if you saw any thing like that, if the approbation of others can recommend me (where I much more desired it) to this company——

Capt. C. Oh the civil person—But, dear Pounce, you know I am your professed admirer—Now my brother and I want your help in a business that requires a little more dexterity than we ourselves are masters of.

Pounce. You know, sir, my character is helping the distressed, which I do freely, and without reserve; while others are for distinguishing rigidly on the justice of the occasion, and so lose the grace of the benefit——Now 'tis my profession to assist a free-hearted young fellow against an unnatural long-lived father—to disencumber men of pleasure of the vexation of unwieldy estates, to support a feeble title to an inheritance, to——

Cler. sen. I have been well acquainted with your merits ever since I saw you, with so much compassion, prompt a stammering witness in Westminster-hall——that wanted instruction—I love a man that can venture his ears with so much bravery for his friend.

Pounce. Dear, sir, spare my modesty, and let me know to what all this panegyric tends.

Cler. sen. Why, sir, what I would say is in behalf of my brother the captain here, whose misfortune it is that I was born before him.

Pounce. I am confident he had rather you should have been so, than any other man in England.

Capt. C. You do me justice, Mr. Pounce——But though 'tis to that gentleman, I am still a younger brother; and you know we that are so, are generally condemn'd to shops, colleges, or inns of court.

Pounce. But you, sir, have escaped 'em; you have been trading in the noble mart of glory——

Capt. C. That's true—But the general makes such haste to finish the war, that we red coats may be soon out of fashion—and then I am a fellow of the most easy, indolent disposition in the world; I hate all manner of business.

Pounce. A composed temper, indeed!

Capt. C. In such case, I should have no way of livelihood, but calling over this gentleman's dogs in the country, drinking his stale beer to the neighbourhood, or marrying a fortune.

Cler. sen. To be short, Pounce—I am putting Jack upon marriage; and you are so public an envoy, or rather plenipotentiary, from the very different nations of Cheapside, Covent-garden, and St. James's; you have, too, the mien and language of each place so naturally, that you are the properest instrument I know in the world, to help an honest young fellow to favour in one of 'em, by credit in the other.

Pounce. By what I understand of your many prefaces, gentlemen, the purpose of all this is—That it would not, in the least, discompose this gentleman's easy, indolent disposition, to fall into twenty thousand pounds, though it came upon him never so suddenly.

Capt. C. You are a very discerning man—How could you see so far through me, as to know I love a fine woman, pretty equipage, good company, and a clean habitation?

Pounce. Well, though I am so much a conjuror—What then?

Cler. sen. You know a certain person, into whose hands you now and then recommend a young heir, to be relieved from the vexation of tenants, taxes, and so forth—

Pounce. What! my worthy friend, and city patron, H Ezekiah Tipkin, banker, in Lombard-street; would the noble captain lay any sums in his hands?

Capt. C. No—But the noble captain would have treasure out of his hands—You know his niece.

Pounce. To my knowledge, ten thousand pounds in money.

Capt. C. Such a stature! such a blooming countenance! so easy a shape!

Pounce. In jewels of her grandmother's five thousand—

Capt. C. Her wit so lively, her mien so alluring!

Pounce. In land a thousand a year.

Capt. C. Her lips have that certain prominence, that swelling softness, that they invite to a pressure; her eyes that languish, that they give pain, though they look only inclined to rest——Her whole person that one charm——

Pounce. Why I thought you had never seen her——

Capt. C. No more I ha'n't.

Pounce. Who told you, then, of her inviting lips, her soft sleepy eyes?——

Capt. C. You yourself.

Pounce. Sure you rave; I never spoke of her before to you.

Capt. C. Why, you won't face me down—Did you not just now say, she had ten thousand pounds in money, five in jewels, and a thousand a year?

Pounce. I confess my own stupidity, and her charms—Why, if you were to meet, you would certainly please her; you have the cant of loving.—But, pray, may we be free? That young gentleman——

Capt. C. A very honest, modest gentleman of my acquaintance: one that has much more in him than he appears to have; you shall know him better, sir; this is Mr. Pounce. Mr. Pounce, this is Mr. Fainlove; I must desire you to let him be known to you, and your friends.

Pounce. I shall be proud—Well, then, since we may be free, you must understand, the young lady, by being kept from the world, has made a world of her own.—She has spent all her solitude in reading romances; her head is full of shepherds, knights, flowery meads, groves, and streams; so that if you talk like a man of this world to her, you do nothing.

Capt. C. Oh let me alone—I have been a great traveller in fairy land myself; I know Oroondates, Cassandra; Astrea and Clelia are my intimate acquaintance.

Pounce. That would do, that would do——her very language.

Cler. sen. Why then, dear Pounce, I know thou art the only man living that can serve him.

Pounce. Gentlemen, you must pardon me, I am soliciting the marriage settlement between her and a country booby, her cousin, Humpbrey Gabbins, sir Harry's heir, who is come to town to take possession of her.

Cler. sen. Well, all that I can say to the matter is, that a thousand pounds on the day of Jack's marriage to her, is more than you'll get by the dispatch of those deeds.

Pounce. Why a thousand pounds is a pretty thing, especially when 'tis to take a lady fair out of the hands of an obstinate ill-bred clown, to give her to a gentle swain, a dying enamour'd knight.

Cler. sen. Ay, dear Pounce—consider but that—the justice of the thing.

Pounce. Besides, he is just come from the glorious Blenheim! Look ye, captain, I hope you have learn'd an implicit obedience to your leaders.

Capt. C. 'Tis all I know.

Pounce. Then, if I am to command—make no one step without me—And since we may be free—I am also to acquaint you, there will be more merit in bringing this matter to bear than you imagine—Yet right measures make all things possible.

Capt. C. We'll follow yours exactly.

Pounce. But the great matter against us is want of time, for the nymph's uncle, and 'squire's father, this morning met, and made an end of the matter—But the difficulty of a thing, captain, shall be no reason against attempting it.

Capt. C. I have so great an opinion of your conduct that I warrant you we conquer all.

Pounce. I am so intimately employ'd by old Tipkin, and so necessary to him, that I may, perhaps, puzzle things yet.

Cler. sen. I have seen thee cajole the knave very dexterously.

Pounce. Why, really, sir, generally speaking, 'tis but knowing what a man thinks of himself, and giving him that, to make him what else you please—Now

Tipkin is an absolute Lombard-street wit, a fellow that drolls on the strength of fifty thousand pounds: he is call'd on 'Change, Sly-boots, and by the force of a very good credit, and very bad conscience, he is a leading person: but we must be quick, or he'll sneer old sir Harry out of his senses, and strike up the sale of his niece immediately.

Capt. C. But my rival, what's he?

Pounce. There's some hopes there; for I hear the booby is as averse, as his father is inclined to it—One is as obstinate, as the other cruel.

Cler. sen. He is, they say, a pert blockhead, and very lively out of his father's sight.

Pounce. He that gave me his character, call'd him a docile dunce, a fellow rather absurd, than a direct fool.—When his father's absent, he'll pursue any thing he's put upon—But we must not lose time.—Pray be you two brothers at home to wait for any notice from me, while that pretty gentleman and I, whose face I have known, take a walk and look about for 'em—So, so—
young lady—— [Aside to Fainlove. *Exeunt.*

Enter SIR HARRY GUBBIN and TIPKIN.

Sir H. Look ye, brother Tipkin; as I told you before, my business in town is to dispose of an hundred head of cattle, and my son.

Tip. Brother Gubbin, as I signified to you in my last, bearing date September 13th, my niece has a thousand pounds per annum, and because I have found you a plain-dealing man (particularly in the easy pad you put into my hands last summer) I was willing you should have the refusal of my niece, provided that I have a discharge from all retrospects while her guardian, and one thousand pounds for my care.

Sir H. Ay, but brother, you rate her too high; the war has fetch'd down the price of women: the whole nation is overrun with petticoats; our daughters lie upon our hands, brother Tipkin; girls are drugs, sir, more drugs.

Tip. Look ye, sir Harry—Let girls be what they

will—a thousand pounds a year is a thousand pounds a year; and a thousand pounds a year is neither girl nor boy.

Sir H. Look ye, Mr. Tipkin, the main article with me is, that foundation of wives' rebellion, and husbands' suokoldom, that cursed pin-money—Five hundred pounds per annum pin-money.

Tip. The word pin-money, sir Harry, is a term——

Sir H. It is a term, brother, we never had in our family, nor ever will—make her jointure in widowhood accordingly large, but four hundred pounds a year is enough to give no account of.

Tip. Well, sir Harry, since you can't swallow these pins, I will abate to four hundred pounds.

Sir H. And to mollify the article—as well as specify the uses, we'll put in the names of several female utensils; as needles, knitting-needles, tape, thread, scissars, bodkins, fans, play-books, with other toys of that nature. And now, since we have as good as concluded on the marriage, it will not be improper that the young people see each other.

Tip. I don't think it prudent 'till the very instant of marriage, lest they should not like one another.

Sir H. They shall meet——As for the young girl she cannot dislike Numps; and for Numps, I never suffer'd him to have any thing he liked in his life. He'll be here immediately; he has been train'd up from his childhood under such a plant as this in my hand—I have taken pains in his education.

Tip. Sir Harry, I approve your method; for since you have left off hunting, you might otherwise want exercise, and this is a subtle expedient to preserve your own health, and your son's good manners.

Sir H. It has been the custom of the Gubbins to preserve severity and discipline in their families—I myself was caned the day before my wedding.

Tip. Ay, sir Harry, had you not been well cudgelled in youth, you had never been the man you are.

Sir H. You say right, now I feel the benefit of it—There's a crab-tree near our house, which flourishes

for the good of my posterity, and has brushed our jackets, from father to son, for several generations.

Tip. I am glad to hear you have all things necessary for the family within yourselves——

Sir H. Oh! yonder, I see Numps is coming——I have drest him in the very suit I had on at my own wedding; 'tis a most becoming apparel.

Enter HUMPHREY GUBBIN.

Tip. Truly, the youth makes a good marriageable figure.

Sir H. Come forward, Numps; this is your uncle Tipkin, your mother's brother, Numps, that is so kind as to bestow his niece upon you.—Don't be so glum, sirrah. Don't bow to a man with a face as if you'd knock him down, don't, sirrah. *[Apart.]*

Tip. I am glad to see you, cousin Humphrey—He is not talkative, I observe already.

Sir H. He is very shrewd, sir, when he pleases—Do you see this crab-stick, you dog? *[Apart]* Well, Numps, don't be out of humour. Will you talk? *[Apart]* Come, we're your friends, Numps, come, lad.

Hump. You are a pure fellow for a father. This is always your trick, to make a great fool of one before company. *[Apart to his Father.]*

Sir H. Don't disgrace me, sirrah: you grim graceless rogue. *[Apart]*—Brother, he has been bred up to respect and silence before his parents—yet did you but hear what a noise he makes sometimes in the kitchen, or the kennel, he's the loudest of 'em all.

Tip. Well, sir Harry, since you assure me he can speak, I'll take your word for it.

Hump. I can speak when I see occasion, and I can hold my tongue when I see occasion.

Sir H. Well said, Numps—sirrah, I see you can do well, if you will. *[Apart.]*

Tip. Pray walk up to me, cousin Humphrey.

Sir H. Ay, walk to and fro between us, with your hat under your arm. Clear up your countenance.

[Apart.]

Tip. I see, sir Harry, you han't set him a capering under a French dancing-master: he does not mince it: he has not learn'd to walk by a courrant, or a boree.—His paces are natural, sir Harry.

Hump. I don't know, but 'tis so we walk in the west of England.

Sir H. Ay, right, Numps, and so we do—Ha! ha! ha! Pray, brother, observe his make, none of your lath-back'd wishy washy breed—come hither, Numps. Can't you stand still? [*Apart, measuring his Shoulders.*]

Tip. I presume this is not the first time, sir Harry, you have measured his shoulders with your cane.

Sir H. Look ye, brother, two feet and an half in the shoulders.

Tip. Two feet and an half? we must make some settlement on the younger children.

Sir H. Not like him, quotha'!

Tip. He may see his cousin when he pleases.

Hump. But hark ye, unole, I have a scruple I had better mention before marriage than after.

Tip. What's that? what's that?

Hump. My cousin, you know, is a-kin to me, and I don't think it lawful for a young man to marry his own relations.

Sir H. Harkye, harkye, Numps, we have got a way to solve all that—Sirrah! Consider this oadgel! Your cousin! Suppose I'd have you marry your grandmother; what then? [*Apart.*]

Tip. Well, has your father satisfied you in the point, Mr. Humphrey?

Hump. Ay, ay, sir, very well: I have not the least scruple remaining; no, no—not in the least, sir.

Tip. Then harkye, brother; we'll go take a whet, and settle the whole affair.

Sir H. Come, we'll leave Numps here—he knows the way. Not marry your own relations, sirrah!

[*Apart. Exeunt Sir Harry and Tipkin.*]

Hump. Very fine, very fine; how prettily this park is stocked with soldiers, and deer, and ducks, and

ladies——Ha! where are the old fellows gone? where can they be, tro'——I'll ask these people——

Enter POUNCE and FAINLOVE.

Hump. Ha, you pretty young gentleman, did you see my father?

Fain. Your father, sir?

Hump. A weazel-faced cross old gentleman, with spindle shanks?

Fain. No, sir.

Hump. A crab-tree stick in his hand?

Pounce. We ha'n't met any body with these marks, but sure I have seen you before——Are not you Mr. Humphrey Gubbin, son and heir to sir Henry Gubbin?

Hump. I am his son and heir—but how long I shall be so I can't tell, for he talks every day of disinheriting me.

Pounce. Dear sir, let me embrace you—Nay, don't be offended if I take the liberty to kiss you; Mr. Fainlove, pray [*Fainlove kisses*] kiss the gentleman—Nay, dear sir, don't stare and be surprised; for I have had a desire to be better known to you ever since I saw you one day clinch your fist at your father, when his back was turn'd upon you—For I must own I very much admire a young gentleman of spirit.

Hump. Why, sir, would it not vex a man to the heart, to have an old fool snubbing a body every minute afore company?

Pounce. Oh fie, he uses you like a boy.

Hump. Like a boy! He lays me on, now and then, as if I were one of his hounds—You can't think what a rage he was in this morning, because I boggled a little at marrying my own cousin.

Pounce. A man can't be too scrupulous, Mr. Humphrey; a man can't be too scrupulous.

Hump. Sir, I could as soon love my own flesh and blood; we should squabble like brother and sister; do you think we should not, Mr. ——? Pray, gentlemen, may I crave the favour of your names?

Pounce. Sir, I am the very person that have been

employed to draw up the articles of marriage between you and your cousin.

Hump. Ay, say you so? Then you can inform me in some things concerning myself?—Pray, sir, what estate am I heir to?

Pounce. To fifteen hundred pounds a year, an on-tailed estate——

Hump. I am glad to hear it, with all my heart; and can you satisfy me in another question—Pray how old am I at present?

Pounce. Three-and-twenty last March.

Hump. Why, as sure as you are there, they have kept me back. I have been told by some of the neighbourhood, that I was born the very year the pigeon-house was built, and every body knows the pigeon-house is three-and-twenty—Why, I find there has been tricks play'd me; I have obey'd him all along, as if I had been obliged to it.

Pounce. Not at all, sir; your father can't out you out of one acre of fifteen hundred pounds a year.

Hump. What a fool have I been, to give him his head so long!

Pounce. A man of your beauty and fortune may find out ladies enough that are not a-kin to you.

Hump. Look ye, Mr. What-d'ye-call—As to my beauty, I don't know but they may take a liking to that—But, sir, mayn't I crave your name?

Pounce. My name, sir, is Pounce, at your service.

Hump. Pounce, with a P——!

Pounce. Yes, sir, and Samuel with an S——.

Hump. Why then, Mr. Samuel Pounce, do you know any gentlewoman that you think I could like? For to tell you truly, I took an antipathy to my cousin ever since my father proposed her to me—And since every body knows I came up to be married, I don't care to go down and look balk'd.

Pounce. I have a thought just come into my head—Do you see this young gentleman? he has a sister, a prodigious fortune—'faith, you two shall be acquainted.

Fain. I can't pretend to expect so accomplish'd a

gentleman as Mr. Humphrey for my sister! but, being your friend, I'll be at his service in the affair.

Hump. If I had your sister, she and I should live like two turtles.

Pounce. Mr. Humphrey, you shan't be fool'd any longer. I'll carry you into company. Mr. Fainlove, you shall introduce him to Mrs. Clerimont's toilet.

Fain. She'll be highly taken with him, for she loves a gentleman whose manner is particular.

Pounce. What, sir, a person of your pretensions, a clear estate, no portions to pay! 'Tis barbarous, your treatment—Mr. Humphrey, I'm afraid you want money—There's for you—What, a man of your accomplishments! [Giving a Purse.

Hump. And yet you see, sir, how they use me—Dear sir, you are the best friend I ever met with in all my life—Now I am flush of money bring me to your sister, and I warrant you for my behaviour.—A man's quite another thing with money in his pocket—you know.

Pounce. How little the oaf wonders why I should give him money! You shall never want, Mr. Humphrey, while I have it—Mr. Humphrey; but, dear friend, I must take my leave of you, I have some extraordinary business on my hands; I can't stay; but you must not say a word.

Fain. But you must be in the way half an hour hence, and I'll introduce you at Mrs. Clerimont's.

Pounce. Make 'em believe you are willing to have your cousin Bridget, 'till opportunity serves: farewell, dear friend. [Exit Pounce and Fainlove.

Hump. Farewell, good Mr. Samuel Pounce—But let's see my cash—'tis very true, the old saying, a man meets with more friendship from strangers, than his own relations.—Let's see my cash, one, two, three, four, there on that side—one, two, three, four, on that side; 'tis a foolish thing to put all one's money in one pocket; 'tis like a man's whole estate in one county—These five in my fol—I'll keep these in my hand, lest I should have present occasion—But this town's full of pickpockets—I'll go home again. [Exit, whistling.

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I. *The same.*

Enter POUNCE, and CAPTAIN CLERIMONT with his Arm in a Scarf.

Pounce. You are now well enough instructed both in the aunt and niece to form your behaviour.

Capt. C. But to talk with her apart is the great matter.

Pounce. The antiquated virgin has a mighty affection for youth, and is a great lover of men and money—One of these, at least, I am sure I can gratify her in by turning her pence in the annuities, or the stocks of one of the companies; some way or other I'll find to entertain her, and engage you with the young lady.

Capt. C. Since that is her ladyship's turn; so busy and fine a gentleman as Mr. Pounce must needs be in her good graces.

Pounce. So shall you too—But you must not be seen with me at first meeting; I'll dog 'em, while you watch at a distance.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter AUNT and NIECE.

Niece. Was it not my gallant that whistled so charmingly in the parlour, before he went out this morning? He's a most accomplish'd cavalier.

Aunt. Come, niece, come—You don't do well to make sport with your relations, especially with a young gentleman that has so much kindness for you.

Niece. Kindness for me! What a phrase is there to express the darts and flames, the sighs and languishings of an expecting lover!

Aunt. Pray, niece, forbear this idle trash, and talk like other people. Your cousin Humphrey will be true and hearty in what he says, and that's a great deal better than the talk and compliment of romances.

Niece. Good madam, don't wound my ears with such expressions: do you think I can ever love a man that's true and hearty! What a peasant-like amour do these coarse words import? True and hearty! Pray, aunt, endeavour a little at the embellishment of your style.

Aunt. Alack-a-day, cousin Biddy, these idle romances have quite turn'd your head.

Niece. How often must I desire you, madam, to lay aside that familiar name, cousin Biddy? I never hear it without blushing—Did you ever meet with an heroine, in those idle romances as you call 'em, that was term'd Biddy?

Aunt. Ah! Cousin, cousin—These are mere vapours, indeed—nothing but vapours.

Niece. No, the heroine has always something soft and engaging in her name—something that gives us a notion of the sweetness of her beauty and behaviour. A name that glides through a half a dozen tender syllables, as Elismunda, Clidamira, Deidamia, that runs upon vowels of the tongue, not hissing through ones teeth, or breaking them with consonants.—'Tis strange rudeness those familiar names they give us, when there is Aurelia, Saccharissa, Gloriana for people of condition; and Celia, Chloris, Corinna, Mopsa, for their maids and those of lower rank.

Aunt. Look ye, Biddy, this is not to be supported; I know not where you learned this nicety; but I can tell you, forsooth, as much as you despise it, your mother was a Bridget afore you, and an excellent housewife.

Niece. Good madam, don't upbraid me with my mother Bridget, and an excellent housewife.

Aunt. Yes, I say, she was, and spent her time in better learning than ever you did; not in reading of fights and battles of dwarfs and giants; but in writing out receipts for broths, possets, caudles, and surfeit-waters, as became a good country gentlewoman.

Niece. My mother, and a Bridget?

Aunt. Yes, niece; I say again your mother, my sister, was a Bridget! the daughter of her mother Margery, of her mother Cicely, of her mother Alice.

Niece. Have you no mercy? Oh the barbarous genealogy!

Aunt. Of her mother Winifred, of her mother Joan.

Niece. Since you will run on, then I must needs tell you I am not satisfied in the point of my nativity. Many an infant has been placed in a cottage with obscure parents, till by chance some ancient servant of the family has known it by its marks.

Aunt. Ay, you had best be searched—That's like your calling the winds the fanning gales, before I don't know how much company; and the tree that was blown by it, had, forsooth, a spirit imprison'd in the trunk of it.

Niece. Ignorance!

Aunt. Then a cloud this morning had a flying dragon in it.

Niece. What eyes had you that you could see nothing? For my part, I look upon it as a prodigy, and expect something extraordinary will happen to me before night—But you have a gross relish of things. What noble descriptions in romances had been lost, if the writers had been persons of your gout?

Aunt. I wish the authors had been hang'd, and their books burnt, before you had seen 'em.

Niece. Simplicity!

Aunt. A parcel of improbable lies.

Niece. Indeed, madam, your raillery is coarse——

Aunt. Fit only to corrupt young girls, and fill their heads with a thousand foolish dreams of I don't know what.

Niece. Nay, now, madam, you grow extravagant.

Aunt. What I say is not to vex, but advise you for your good.

Niece. What, to burn Philocles, Artaxerxes, Oroondates, and the rest of the heroic lovers, and take my country booby, cousin Humphrey, for an husband!

Aunt. Oh dear, oh dear, Biddy! Pray, good dear, learn to act and speak like the rest of the world; come, come, you shall marry your cousin, and live comfortably.

Niece. Live comfortably! What kind of life is that? A great heiress live comfortably! Pray, aunt, learn to raise your ideas——What is, I wonder, to live comfortably?

Aunt. To live comfortably, is to live with prudence and frugality, as we do in Lombard-street.

Niece. As we do——that's a fine life indeed, with one servant of each sex——Let's see how many things our coachman is good for——He rubs down his horses, lays the cloth, whets the knives, and sometimes makes beds.

Aunt. A good servant should turn his hand to every thing in a family.

Niece. Nay, there's not a creature in our family, that has not two or three different duties; as John is butler, footman, and coachman; so Mary is cook, laundress, and chamber-maid.

Aunt. Well, and do you laugh at that?

Niece. No——not I——nor at the coach-horses, though one has an easy trot for my uncle's riding, and t'other an easy pace for your side-saddle.

Aunt. And so you jeer at the good management of your relations, do you?

Niece. No, I'm well satisfied that all the house are

creatures of business; but, indeed, was in hopes that my poor lap-dog might have lived with me upon my fortune without an employment; but my uncle threatens every day to make him a turnspit, that he too, in his sphere, may help us to live comfortably.

Aunt. Hark ye, cousin Biddy.

Niece. I vow I'm out of countenance, when our butler, with his careful face, drives us all stowed in a chariot drawn by one horse ambling and t'other trotting, with his provisions behind for the family, from Saturday night till Monday morning, bound for Hackney—Then we make a comfortable figure, indeed.

Aunt. So we do, and so will you always, if you marry your cousin Humphrey.

Niece. Name not the creature.

Aunt. Creature! what, your own cousin a creature!

Niece. Oh, let's be going, I see yonder another creature that does my uncle's law business, and has, I believe, made ready the deeds, those barbarous deeds.

Aunt. What, Mr. Pounce a creature too! Nay, now I'm sure you're ignorant—You shall stay, and you'll learn more wit from him in an hour, than in a thousand of your foolish books in an age—Your servant, Mr. Pounce.

Enter POUNCE.

Pounce. Ladies, I hope I don't interrupt any private discourse.

Aunt. Not in the least, sir.

Pounce. I should be leath to be esteem'd one of those who think they have a privilege of mixing in all companies, without any business, but to bring forth a loud laugh, or vain jest.

Niece. He talks with the mien and gravity of a Paladin.

[*Aside.*

Pounce. Madam, I bought the other day at three and an half, and sold at seven.

Aunt. Then pray, sir, sell for me in time. *Niece,* mind him; he has an infinite deal of wit—

Pounce. This that I speak of was for you—I never neglect such opportunities to serve my friends.

Aunt. Indeed, Mr. Pounce, you are, I protest, without flattery, the wittiest man in the world.

Pounce. I assure you, madam, I said last night, before an hundred head of citizens, that Mrs. Barsheba Tipkin was the most ingenious young lady in the liberties.

Aunt. Well, Mr. Pounce, you are so facetious—But you are always among the great ones—'tis no wonder you have it.

Niece. Idle! idle!

Pounce. But, madam, you know alderman Greygoose, he's a notable joking man—Well, says he, here's Mrs. Barsheba's health—She's my mistress.

Aunt. That man makes me split my sides with laughing, he's such a wag—Mr. Pounce pretends Greygoose said all this, but I know 'tis his own wit, for he's in love with me.

[*Aside.*

Pounce. But, madam, there's a certain affair I should communicate to you.

[*Apart.*

Aunt. Ay, 'tis certainly so—He wants to break his mind to me.

[*Captain Clerimont passing.*

Pounce. Oh, captain Clerimont, captain Clerimont, —Ladies, pray let me introduce this young gentleman; he's my friend, a youth of great virtue and goodness, for all he is in a red coat.

Aunt. If he's your friend, we need not doubt his virtue.

Capt. C. Ladies, you're taking the cool breath of the morning.

Niece. A pretty phrase.

[*Aside.*

Aunt. That's the pleasantest time this warm weather.

Capt. C. Oh, 'tis the season of the pearly dews, and gentle zephyrs.

Niece. Ay! pray mind that again, aunt.

[*Aside.*

Pounce. Shan't we repose ourselves on yonder seat? I love improving company, and to communicate.

Aunt. 'Tis certainly so—He's in love with me, and

wants opportunity to tell me so—I don't care if we do
—He's a most ingenious man.

[*Aside. Exeunt Aunt and Pounce.*]

Capt. C. We enjoy here, madam, all the pretty landscapes of the country, without the pains of going thither.

Niece. Art and nature are in a rivalry, or rather a confederacy, to adorn this beauteous park with all the agreeable variety of water, shade, walks, and air. What can be more charming than these flowery lawns?

Capt. C. Or these gloomy shades?

Niece. Or these embroider'd vallies?

Capt. C. Or that transparent stream?

Niece. Or these bowing branches on the banks of it, that seem to admire their own beauty in the crystal mirror?

Capt. C. I am surprised, madam, at the delicacy of your phrase—Can such expressions come from Lombard-street?

Niece. Alas, sir! what can be expected from an innocent virgin, that has been immured almost one and twenty years from the conversation of mankind, under the care of an Urganda of an aunt?

Capt. C. Bless me, madam, how have you been abused! many a lady before your age has had an hundred lances broken in her service, and as many dragons cut to pieces in honour of her.

Niece. Oh, the charming man! [*Aside.*]

Capt. C. Do you believe Pamela was one and twenty before she knew Musidorus?

Niece. I could hear him ever. [*Aside.*]

Capt. C. A lady of your wit and beauty might have given occasion for a whole romance in folio before that age.

Niece. Oh, the powers! who can he be? Oh, youth unknown! But let me, in the first place, know whom I talk to; for, sir, I am wholly unacquainted both with your person, and your history—You seem, indeed, by your deportment, and the distinguishing mark of your bravery which you bear, to have been in a conflict—

May I not know what cruel beauty obliged you to such adventures, till she pitied you?

Capt. C. Oh, the pretty coxcomb! [*Aside*] Oh, Blenheim, Blenheim! Oh, Cordelia, Cordelia!

Niece. You mention the place of battle—I would fain hear an exact description of it—Our public papers are so defective, they don't so much as tell us how the sun rose on that glorious day—Were there not a great many flights of vultures before the battle began?

Capt. C. Oh, madam, they have eaten up half my acquaintance.

Niece. Certainly never birds of prey were so feasted—by report, they might have lived half a year on the very legs and arms our troops left behind 'em.

Capt. C. Had we not fought near a wood, we should ne'er have got legs enough to have come home upon. The joiner of the foot guards has made his fortune by it.

Niece. I shall never forgive your general—He has put all my ancient heroes out of countenance; he has pulled down Cyrus and Alexander, as much as Louis le Grand—But your own part in that action?

Capt. C. Only that slight hurt; for the astrologer said at my nativity, Nor fire, nor sword, nor pike, nor musket shall destroy this child, let him but avoid fair eyes.—But, madam, may'nt I crave the name of her that has captivated my heart?

Niece. I can't guess whom you mean by that description; but if you ask my name, I must confess you put me upon revealing what I always keep as the greatest secret I have; for, would you believe it—they have call'd me—I don't know how to own it, but have call'd me—Bridget.

Capt. C. Bridget?

Niece. Bridget.

Capt. C. Bridget?

Niece. Spare my confusion, I beseech you, sir, and if you have occasion to mention me, let it be by Parthenissa; for that's the name I have assumed ever since I came to years of discretion.

Capt. C. The unsupportable tyranny of parents, to fix names on helpless infants which they must blush at all their lives after! I don't think there's a surname in the world to match it.

Niece. No! what do you think of Tipkin?

Capt. C. Tipkin! Why, I think if I was a young lady that had it, I'd part with it immediately.

Niece. Pray how would you get rid of it?

Capt. C. I'd change it for another—I could recommend to you three very pretty syllables—What do you think of Clerimont?

Niece. Clerimont! Clerimont! Very well—But what right have I to it?

Capt. C. If you will give me leave, I'll put you in possession of it. By a very few words, I can make it over to you, and your children after you.

Niece. Oh, fie! whither are you running? You know a lover should sigh in private, and languish whole years before he reveals his passion; he should retire into some solitary grove, and make the woods and wild beasts his confidants—You should have told it to the echo half a year before you had discovered it even to my handmaid. And yet besides—to talk to me of children—Did you ever hear of an heroine having children?

Capt. C. What can a lover do, madam, now the race of giants is extinct? Had I loved in those days, there had not been a mortal six feet high, but should have owned Parthenissa for the paragon of beauty, or measured his length on the ground. Parthenissa should have been heard by the brooks and deserts at midnight, the echo's burden, and the river's murmur.

Niece. That had been a golden age, indeed! But see, my aunt has left her grave companion, and is coming towards us; I command you to leave me.

Capt. C. Thus Oroondates, when Statira dismissed him her presence, threw himself at her feet, and implored permission but to live. [Offering to kneel.

Niece. And thus Statira raised him from the earth, permitting him to live and love. [Exit Captain C.

Enter AUNT.

Aunt. Is not Mr. Pounce's conversation very improving, niece?

Niece. Is not Mr. Clerimont a very pretty name, aunt?

Aunt. He has so much prudence.

Niece. He has so much gallantry.

Aunt. So sententious in his expressions.

Niece. So polished in his language.

Aunt. All he says, is, methinks, so like a sermon.

Niece. All he speaks savours of romance.

Aunt. Romance, niece? Mr. Pounce! what savours of romance?

Niece. No, I mean his friend, the accomplished Mr. Clerimont.

Aunt. Fie, for one of your years to commend a young fellow!

Niece. One of my years is mightily governed by example! You did not dislike Mr. Pounce.

Aunt. What, censorious too? I find there is no trusting you out of the house; a moment's fresh air does but make you still the more in love with strangers, and despise your own relations.

Niece. I am certainly by the power of an enchantment placed among you, but I hope I this morning employed one to seek adventures, and break the charm.

Aunt. Vapours, Biddy, indeed! Nothing but vapours—Cousin Humphrey shall break the charm.

Niece. Name him not—Call me still Biddy, rather than name that brute. [*Exeunt Aunt and Niece.*]

Enter CAPTAIN CLERIMONT and POUNCE.

Capt. C. A perfect Quixote in petticoats! I tell thee, Pounce, she governs herself wholly by romance—it has got into her very blood—She starts by rule, and blushes by example—Could I but have produced one instance of a lady's complying at first sight, I should have gained her promise on the spot—How am I bound to curse the cold constitutions of the Philoclea's and Statira's! I am undone for want of precedents.

Pounce. I am sure I laboured hard to favour your

conference; and plied the old woman all the while with something that tickled either her vanity or her covetousness.

Capt. C. I pity the drudgery you have gone through; but what's next to be done towards getting my pretty heroine?

Pounce. What should next be done in the ordinary method of things? You have seen her; the next regular approach is, that you cannot subsist a moment, without sending forth musical complaints of your misfortune, by way of *sérenade*.

Capt. C. I can nick yon there, sir; I'll get every thing ready as soon as possible.

Pounce. While you are playing upon the fort, I'll be within, and observe what execution you do, and give you intelligence accordingly.

Capt. C. You must have an eye upon Mr. Humphrey, while I feed the vanity of Parthenissa; for I am so experienced in these matters, that I know none but coxcombs think to win a woman by any desert of their own—No, it must be done rather by complying with some prevailing humour of your mistress, than exerting any good quality in yourself.

"Tis not the lover's merit wins the field,
But to themselves alone the beauteous yield.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.



SCENE I. *A Chamber.*

Enter MRS. CLERIMONT, FAINLOVE, carrying her Lap-dog, and JENNY.

Jenny. Madam, the footman that's recommended to you is below, if your ladyship will please to take him.

Mrs. C. Oh, fie! don't believe I'll think on't; it is impossible he should be good for any thing—The English are so saucy with their liberty—I'll have all my lower servants French; there cannot be a good footman born out of an absolute monarchy.

Jenny. I am beholden to your ladyship, for believing so well of the maid-servants in England.

Mrs. C. Indeed, Jenny, I could wish thou wert really French: for thou art plain English in spite of example—Your arms do but hang on, and you move perfectly upon joints; not with a swim of the whole person—But I am talking to you, and have not adjusted myself to-day: What pretty company a glass is, to have another self! [*Kisses the Dog*] The converse in soliloquy! To have company that never contradicts or

displeases us! The pretty visible echo of our actions! [*Kisses the Dog*] How easy too it is to be disencumbered with stays, where a woman has any thing like shape; if no shape, a good air—But I look best when I'm talking. [*Kisses the Lapdog in Fainlove's arms.*]

Jenny. You always look well.

Mrs. C. For I'm always talking, you mean so: that disquiets thy sullen English temper, but I don't really look so well when I am silent—If I do but offer to speak—Then I may say that—Oh, bless me, Jenny, I am so pale, I am afraid of myself—I have not laid on half red enough—What a dough-baked thing I was before I improved myself, and travelled for beauty—However, my face is very prettily designed to-day.

Fain. Indeed, madam, you begin to have so fine an hand, that you are younger every day than other.

Mrs. C. The ladies abroad used to call me Mademoiselle Titian, I was so famous for my colouring: but, pr'ythee, wench, bring me my black eye-brows out of the next room.

Jenny. Madam, I have 'em in my hand.

Fain. It would be happy for all that are to see you to-day, if you could change your eyes too.

Mrs. C. Gallant enough—No, hang it, I'll wear these I have on; this mode of visage takes mightily; I had three ladies last week come over to my complexion—I think to be a fair woman this fortnight, till I find I am aped too much; I believe there are an hundred copies of me already.

Jenny. Dear madam, won't your ladyship please to let me be of the next countenance you leave off?

Mrs. C. You may, Jenny; but I assure you, it is a very pretty piece of ill-nature, for a woman that has any genius for beauty, to observe the servile imitation of her manner, her motion, her glances, and her smiles.

Fain. Ay, indeed, madam, nothing can be so ridiculous as to imitate the inimitable.

Mrs. C. Indeed, as you say, Fainlove, the French mien is no more to be learned than the language, without going thither—Then again, to see some poor

ladies who have clownish, penurious, English husbands, turn and torture their old clothes into so many forms, and dye 'em into so many colours, to follow me—What say'st, Jenny? what say'st? not a word?

Jenny. Why, madam, all that I can say—

Mrs. C. Nay, I believe, Jenny, thou hast nothing to say any more than the rest of thy countrywomen—The splenetics speak just as the weather lets 'em; they are mere talking barometers. Abroad the people of quality go on so eternally, and still go on, and are gay and entertaining: in England, discourse is made up of nothing but question and answer—I was t'other day at a visit, where there was a profound silence, for, I believe, the third part of a minute.

Jenny. And your ladyship there?

Mrs. C. They infected me with their dulness. Who can keep up their good humour at an English visit? They sit as at a funeral, silent in the midst of many candles; one, perhaps, alarms the room—'Tis very cold weather—then all the mutes play their fans, till some other question happens, and then the fans go off again.—

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, captain Clerimont, and a very strange gentleman, are come to wait on you.

Mrs. C. Let him and the very strange gentleman come in.

Fain. Oh, madam! that's the country gentleman I was telling you of.

Enter HUMPHREY and CAPTAIN CLERIMONT.

Fain. Madam, may I do myself the honour to recommend Mr. Gubbin, son and heir to sir Harry Gubbin, to your ladyship's notice?

Mrs. C. Mr. Gubbin, I am extremely pleased with your suit; 'tis antique, and originally from France.

Hump. It is always locked up, madam, when I'm in the country. My father prizes it mightily.

Mrs. C. 'Twould make a very pretty dancing suit in

a mask. Oh, captain Clerimont! I have a quarrel with you.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, your ladyship's husband desires to know whether you see company to-day, or not?

Mrs. C. Who, you clown?

Serv. Mr. Clerimont, madam.

Mrs. C. He may come in.

Enter CLERIMONT, Senior.

Mrs. C. Your very humble servant.

Cler. sen. I was going to take the air this morning in my coach, and did myself the honour, before I went, to receive your commands, finding you saw company.

Mrs. C. At any time, when you know I do, you may let me see you. Pray how did you sleep last night? If I had not asked him that question, they might have thought we lay together. [*Aside. Here Fainlove, looking through a Perspective, bows to Clerimont, Senior*] But, captain, I have a quarrel with you; I have utterly forgot those three coupes, you promised to come again and show me. Your humble servant, sir.—But, oh! [*As she is going to be led by the Captain*] have you signed that mortgage to pay off my lady Faddle's winnings at ombre?

Cler. sen. Yes, madam.

Mrs. C. Then all's well, my honour's safe. [*Exit Clerimont, sen.*] Come, captain, lead me this step, for I'm apt to make a false one: you shall show me.

Capt. C. I'll show you, madam, 'tis no matter for a fiddle; I'll give you 'em the French way, in a teaching tune. Pray, more quick—O *mademoiselle, que faites vous—A moi—* There again—Now slide, as it were, with and without measure—There you outdid the gipsy—and you have all the smiles of the dance to a little.

Hump. If this be French dancing and singing, I fancy I could do it—Haw! haw! [*Capers aside.*]

Mrs. C. I protest, Mr. Gubbin, you have almost the step, without any of our country bashfulness. Give

me your hand—Haw! haw! So, so, a little quicker—that's right, haw! Captain, your brother delivered this spark to me, to be diverted here, till he calls for him.

[Exit Captain Clerimont.]

Hump. This outting so high makes one's money jingle confoundedly: I'm resolved I'll never carry above one pocket full hereafter.

Mrs. C. You do it very readily; you amaze me.

Hump. Are the gentlemen of France generally so well bred as we are in England? are they, madam, ha! But, young gentleman, when shall I see this sister? haw, haw, haw! Is not the higher one jumps the better?

Fain. She'll be mightily taken with you, I'm sure. One would not think 'twas in you—you're so gay—and dance so very high—

Hump. What should ail me? Did you think I was wind-gall'd? I can sing too, if I please—but I won't till I see your sister—This is a mighty pretty house.

Mrs. C. Well, do you know that I like this gentleman extremely? I should be glad to form him—But were you never in France, Mr. Gubbin?

Hump. No;—but I'm always thus pleasant, if my father's not by—I protest, I'd advise your sister to have me—I'm for marrying her at once—why should I stand shilly shally like a country bumpkin?

Fain. Mr. Gubbin, I dare say she'll be as forward as you; we'll go in and see her. [Apart.]

Mrs. C. Then he has not yet seen the lady he is in love with. I protest very new and gallant—Mr. Gubbin, she must needs believe you a frank person—Fainlove, I must see this sister too, I'm resolved she shall like him.

There needs not time true passion to discover;

The most believing is the most a lover. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. The Park.

Enter NIECE.

Niece. Oh Clerimont! Clerimont! To be struck at first sight! I'm ashamed of my weakness; I find in

myself all the symptoms of a raging amour; I love solitude; I grow pale; I sigh frequently; I call upon the name of Clerimont when I don't think of it.—His person is ever in my eyes, and his voice in my ears—methinks I long to lose myself in some pensive grove, or to hang over the head of some warbling fountain, with a lute in my hand, softening the murmurs of the water.

Enter AUNT.

Aunt. Biddy, Biddy; where's Biddy Tipkin?

Niece. Whom do you inquire for?

Aunt. Come, come, he's just a coming at the park door.

Niece. Who is coming?

Aunt. Your cousin Humphrey—who should be coming? Your lover, your husband that is to be.—Pray, my dear, look well, and be civil, for your credit and mine too.

Niece. If he answers my idea, I shall rally the rustic to death.

Aunt. Hist——here he is.

Enter HUMPHREY.

Hump. Aunt, your humble servant——Is that——ha! aunt?

Aunt. Yes, cousin Humphrey, that's your cousin Bridget. Well, I'll leave you together.

[Exit Aunt. They sit.]

Hump. Aunt does as she'd be done by, cousin Bridget, does not she, cousin? ha! What, are you a Londoner, and not speak to a gentleman? Look ye, cousin, the old folks resolving to marry us, I thought it would be proper to see how I liked you, as not caring to buy a pig in a poke—for I love to look before I leap.

Niece. Sir, your person and address bring to my mind the whole history of Valentine and Orson: what would they marry me to a wild man? Pray answer me a question or two.

Hump. Ay, ay, as many as you please, cousin Bridget.

Niece. What wood were you taken in? How long have you been caught?

Hump. Caught!

Niece. Where were your haunts?

Hump. My haunts!

Niece. Are not clothes very uneasy to you? Is this strange dress the first you ever wore?

Hump. How!

Niece. Are you not a great admirer of roots, and raw flesh?—Let me look upon your nails—Don't you love blackberries, haws, and pig-nuts, mightily?

Hump. How!

Niece. Canst thou deny that thou wert suckled by a wolf? You han't been so barbarous, I hope, since you came amongst men, as to hunt your nurse—Have you?

Hump. Hunt my nurse? Ay, 'tis so, she's distracted as sure as a gun.—Hark'e, cousin, pray will you let me ask you a question or two?

Niece. If thou hast yet learn'd the use of language, speak, monster.

Hump. How long have you been thus?

Niece. Thus! what wouldst thou say?

Hump. What's the cause of it? Tell me truly now—Did you never love any body before me?

Niece. Go, go, thou'rt a savage. [Rises.]

Hump. They never let you go abroad, I suppose.

Niece. Thou'rt a monster, I tell thee.

Hump. Indeed, cousin, though 'tis folly to tell thee so—I am afraid thou art a mad woman.

Niece. I'll have thee into some forest.

Hump. I'll take thee into a dark room.

Niece. I hate thee.

Hump. I wish you did—There's no hate lost, I assure you, cousin Bridget.

Niece. Cousin Bridget, quoth'a—I'd as soon claim kindred with a mountain bear—I detest thee.

Hump. You never do any harm in these fits, I hope—But do you hate me in earnest?

Niece. Dost thou ask it, ungentle forester?

Hump. Yes, for I've a reason, look ye. It happens very well if you hate me, and in your senses; for to tell you truly—I don't much care for you; and there is another fine woman, as I am inform'd, that is in some hopes of having me.

Niece. This merits my attention. [*Aside.*

Hump. Look ye d'ye see—as I said, I don't care for you—I would not have you set your heart on me—but if you like any body else, let me know it—and I'll find out a way for us to get rid of one another, and deceive the old folks that would couple us.

Niece. This wears the face of an amour—There is something in that thought which makes thy presence less unsupportable.

Hump. Nay, nay, now you're growing fond; if you come with these maid's tricks, to say you hate at first and afterwards like me,—you'll spoil the whole design.

Niece. Don't fear it—When I think of consorting with thee, may the wild boar defile the cleanly ermine, may the tiger be wedded to the kid!

Hump. When I of thee, may the pole-cat catterwaul with the civet!

Niece. When I harbour the least thought of thee, may the silver Thames forget its course!

Hump. When I like thee, may I be soused over head and ears in a horse-pond!—But do you hate me?

Enter AUNT.

Niece. For ever; and you me?

Hump. Most heartily.

Aunt. Ha! I like this—They are come to promises—and protestations. [*Aside.*

Hump. I am very glad I have found a way to please you.

Niece. You promise to be constant.

Hump. Till death.

Niece. Thou best of savages!

Hump. Thou best of savages! poor Biddy.

Aunt. Oh the pretty couple joking on one another. Well, how do you like your cousin Humphrey now?

Niece. Much better than I thought I should—He's quite another thing than what I took him for—We have both the same passions for one another.

Hump. We wanted only an occasion to open our hearts, aunt.

Aunt. Oh, how this will rejoice my brother, and sir Harry! we'll go to 'em.

Hump. No, I must fetch a walk with a new acquaintance, Mr. Samuel Pounce.

Aunt. An excellent acquaintance for your husband! come, niece, come.

Niece. Farewell, rustic.

Hump. B'ye, Biddy.

Aunt. Rustic! Biddy! Ha! ha! pretty creatures.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE FOURTH.



SCENE I. *The same.*

Enter CAPTAIN CLERIMONT and POUNCE.

Capt. C. Does she expect me, then, at this very instant?

Pounce. I tell you, she ordered me to bring the painter at this very hour precisely, to draw her niece. Now I know you are a pretender that way.

Capt. C. Enough, I warrant, to personate the character on such an inspiring occasion.

Pounce. Be sure you play your part in humour: to be a painter for a lady, you're to have the excessive flattery of a lover, the ready invention of a poet, and the easy gesture of a player.

Capt. C. Come, come, no more instructions; my imagination out-runs all you can say: Be gone, be gone! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *NIECE'S Lodgings.*

Enter AUNT and NIECE.

Aunt. Indeed, niece, I am as much overjoy'd to see your wedding day, as if it were my own.

Niece. But, why must it be huddled up so?

Aunt. Oh, my dear, a private wedding is much better; your mother had such a bustle at hers, with feasting and fooling: besides, they did not go to bed till two in the morning.

Niece. Since you understand things so well, I wonder you never married yourself.

Aunt. My dear, I was very cruel thirty years ago, and no body ask'd me since.

Niece. Alas-a-day!

Aunt. Yet, I assure you, there were a great many matches proposed to me—There was sir Gilbert Jolly; but he, forsooth, could not please; he drank ale, and smok'd tobacco, and was no fine gentleman, forsooth—but, then again, there was young Mr. Peregrine Shapely, who had travell'd, and spoke French, and smiled at all I said; he was a fine gentleman—but then he was consumptive: and yet again, to see how one may be mistaken: sir Jolly died in half a year, and my lady Shapely has by that thin slip eight children, that should have been mine; but here's the bridegroom.—So, cousin Humphrey!

Enter HUMPHREY.

Hump. Your servant, ladies—So, my dear—

Niece. So, my savage—

Aunt. O fie, no more of that to your husband, Biddy.

Hump. No matter, I like it as well as duck or love: I know my cousin loves me as well as I do her.

Aunt. I'll leave you together; I must go and get ready an entertainment for you when you come home.

[Exit.

Hump. Well, cousin, are you constant?—Do you hate me still?

Niece. As much as ever.

Hump. What an happiness it is, when people's inclinations jump! I wish I knew what to do with you: Can you get nobody, d'ye think, to marry you?

Niece. Oh, Clerimont, Clerimont! where art thou?

[Aside.

Enter AUNT, and CAPTAIN CLERIMONT disguised.

Aunt. This, sir, is the lady, whom you are to draw—You see, sir, as good flesh and blood as a man would desire to put in colours—I must have her maiden picture.

Hump. Then the painter must make haste—Ha, cousin!

Niece. Hold thy tongue, good savage.

Capt. C. Madam, I'm generally forced to new-mould every feature, and mend nature's handy-work; but here she has made so finish'd an original, that I despair of my copy's coming up to it.

Aunt. Do you hear that, niece?

Niece. I don't desire you to make graces where you find none.

Capt. C. To see the difference of the fair sex—I protest to you, madam, my fancy is utterly exhausted with inventing faces for those that sit to me. The first entertainment I generally meet with, are complaints for want of sleep; they never look'd so pale in their lives, as when they sit for their pictures—Then, so many touches and retouches, when the face is finish'd—That wrinkle ought not to have been, those eyes are too languid, the colour's too weak, that side-look hides the mole on the left cheek. In short, the whole likeness is struck out: but in you, madam, the highest I can come up to will be but rigid justice.

Hump. A comical dog, this!

Aunt. Truly the gentleman seems to understand his business.

Niece. Sir, if your penoil flatters like your tongue, you are going to draw a picture that won't be at all like me. Sure, I have heard that voice somewhere.

[*Aside.*

Capt. C. Madam, be pleased to place yourself near me, nearer still, madam, here falls the best light—You must know, madam, there are three kinds of airs which the ladies most delight in—There is your haughty—your mild—and your pensive air.—The haughty may

be express'd with the head a little more erect than ordinary, and the countenance with a certain disdain in it, so as she may appear almost, but not quite, inexorable: this kind of air is generally heightened with a little knitting of the brows—I gave my lady Scornwell her choice of a dozen frowns, before she could find one to her liking.

Niece. But what's the mild air.

Capt. C. The mild air is compos'd of a languish, and a smile—But if I might advise, I'd rather be a pensive beauty; the pensive usually feels her pulse, leans on one arm, or sits ruminating with a book in her hand—which conversation she is supposed to choose, rather than the endless importunities of lovers.

Hump. A comical dog—

Aunt. Upon my word he understands his business well. I'll tell you, niece, how your mother was drawn—She had an orange in her hand, and a nosegay in her bosom, but a look so pure and fresh-colour'd, you'd have taken her for one of the seasons.

Capt. C. You seem, indeed, madam, most inclined to the pensive—The pensive delights also in the fall of waters, pastoral figures, or any rural view suitable to a fair lady, who, with a delicate spleen, has retired from the world, as sick of its flattery and admiration.

Niece. No—since there is room for fancy in a picture, I would be drawn like the amazon Thalestris, with a spear in my hand, and an helmet on a table before me.—At a distance behind, let there be a dwarf, holding by the bridle a milk-white palfrey.

Capt. C. Madam, the thought is full of spirit; and, if you please, there shall be a cupid stealing away your helmet, to show that love should have a part in all gallant actions.

Niece. That circumstance may be very picturesque.

Capt. C. Here, madam, shall be your own picture, here the palfrey, and here the dwarf—The dwarf must be very little, or we shan't have room for him.

Niece. A dwarf cannot be too little.

Capt. C. I'll make him a blackamoor, to distinguish

him from the other too powerful dwarf—[Sighs] the cupid—I'll place that beauteous boy near you, 'twill look very natural—He'll certainly take you for his mother Venus.

Niece. I leave these particulars to your own fancy.

Capt. C. Please, madam, to uncover your neck a little; a little lower still—a little, little lower.

Niece. I'll be drawn thus, if you please, sir.

Capt. C. Ladies, have you heard the news of a late marriage between a young lady of a great fortune and a younger brother of a good family?

Aunt. Pray, sir, how is it?

Capt. C. This young gentleman, ladies, is a particular acquaintance of mine, and much about my age and stature—Look me full in the face, madam—He accidentally met the young lady, who had in her all the perfections of her sex—Hold up your head, madam, that's right—She let him know that his person and discourse were not altogether disagreeable to her—the difficulty was, how to gain a second interview—Your eyes fall upon mine, madam—For never was there such a sigher in all the vallies of Arcadia, as that unfortunate youth, during the absence of her he loved.

Aunt. A-lack-a-day—poor young gentleman!

Niece. It must be he—what a charming amour is this!

[Aside.]

Capt. C. At length, ladies, he bethought himself of an expedient! he dress'd himself just as I am now, and came to draw her picture—Your eyes fall upon mine, pray, madam.

Hump. A subtle dog, I warrant him.

Capt. C. And by that means found an opportunity of carrying her off, and marrying her.

Aunt. Indeed, your friend was a very vicious young man.

Niece. Yet perhaps the young lady was not displeased at what he had done.

Capt. C. But, madam, what were the transports of the lover, when she made him that confession?

Niece. I dare say she thought herself very happy, when she got out of her guardian's hands.

Aunt. 'Tis very true, niece, there are abundance of those head-strong young baggages about town.

Capt. C. The gentleman has often told me, he was strangely struck at first sight; but when she sat to him for her picture, and assumed all those graces that are proper for the occasion, his torment was so exquisite, his occasions so violent, that he could not have lived a day, had he not found means to make the charmer of his heart his own.

Hump. 'Tis certainly the foolishhest thing in the world to stand shilly-shally about a woman, when one has a mind to marry her.

Capt. C. The young painter turn'd poet on the subject; I believe I have the words by heart.

Niece. A sonnet! pray repeat it.

Capt. C. When gentle Parthenissa walks,
And sweetly smiles, and gaily talks,
A thousand shafts around her fly,
A thousand swains unheeded die:

If then she labours to be seen,
With all her killing air and mien;
For so much beauty, so much art,
What mortal can secure his heart?

Aunt. Why, this is pretty. I think a painter should never be without poetry—it brightens the features strangely—I profess I'm mightily pleased; I'll but just step in, and give some orders, and be with you presently. [Exit.

Niece. Was not this adventurous painter called Clerimont?

Capt. C. It was Clerimont, the servant of Parthenissa; but let me beseech that beauteous maid to resolve, and make the incident I feign'd to her a real one—consider, madam, you are environ'd by cruel and treacherous guards, which would force you to a disagreeable marriage; your case is exactly the same with the princess of the Leontines in Clelia.

Niece. How can we commit such a solecism against all rules! what, in the first leaf of our history to have the marriage? You know it cannot be.

Capt. C. The pleasantest part of the history will be after marriage.

Niece. No! I never yet read of a knight that entered tilt or tournament after wedlock—"Tis not to be expected—When the husband begins, the hero ends; all that noble impulse to glory, all the generous passion for adventures is consumed in the nuptial torch; I don't know how it is, but Mars and Hymen never hit it.

Hump. [*Listening*] Consumed in the nuptial torch! Mars and Hymen! What can all this mean?—I am very glad I can hardly read—They could never get these foolish fancies into my head—I had always a strong brain. [*Aside*] Hark'e, cousin, is not this painter a comical dog?

Niece. I think he's very agreeable company.

Hump. Why then I tell you what—marry him—A painter's a very genteel calling—He's an ingenious fellow, and certainly poor; I fancy he'd be glad on't; I'll keep my aunt out of the room a minute or two, that's all the time you have to consider. [*Exit.*]

Capt. C. Fortune points out to us this only occasion of our happiness: love's of celestial origin, and needs no long acquaintance to be manifest. Lovers, like angels, speak by intuition—Their souls are in their eyes.

Niece. Then I fear he sees mine. [*Aside*] But I can't think of abridging our amours, and cutting off all farther decorations of disguise, serenade, and adventure.

Capt. C. Nor would I willingly lose the merit of long services, midnight sighs, and plaintive solitudes—were there not a necessity.

Niece. Then to be seized by stealth!

Capt. C. Why, madam, you are a great fortune, and should not be married the common way. Indeed, madam, you ought to be stolen.

Niece. But then our history will be so short.

Capt. C. I grant it; but you don't consider there's a device in other's leading you instead of this person that's to have you; and, madam, though our amours

can't furnish out a romance, they'll make a very pretty novel.—Why smiles my fair?

Niece. I am almost of opinion, that had Oroondates been as pressing as Clerimont, Cassandra had been but a pocket-book : but it looks so ordinary, to go out at a door to be married.—Indeed, I ought to be taken out of a window, and run away with.

Enter HUMPHREY and POUNCE.

Hump. Well, cousin, the coach is at the door. If you please I'll lead you.

Niece. I put myself into your hands, good savage ; but you promise to leave me.

Hump. I tell you plainly, you must not think of having me.

Pounce. [*To Capt. C.*] You'll have opportunity enough to carry her off ; the old fellow will be busy with me—I'll gain all the time I can—but be bold and prosper.

Niece. Clerimont, you follow us.

Capt. C. Upon the wings of love.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE FIFTH.



SCENE I. A Chamber.

Enter CLERIMONT, Senior, and FAINLOVE.

Cler. sen. Then she gave you this letter, and bid you read it as a paper of verses?

Fain. This is the place, the hour, the lucky minute—Now am I rubbing up my memory, to recollect all you said to me when you first ruin'd me, that I may attack her right.

Cler. sen. Your eloquence would be needless—'tis so unmodish to need persuasion: modesty makes a lady embarrass'd—But my spouse is above that, as for example, [*Reading her Letter*]*—Fainlove,—You don't seem to want wit—therefore I need say no more, than that distance to a woman of the world is becoming in no man, but a husband: an hour hence come up the back stairs to my closet.—Adieu, mon mignon.*

I am glad you are punctual. I'll conceal myself to observe your interview—Oh, torture! but this wench must not see it.

[*Aside.*]

Fain. Be sure you come time enough to save my reputation.

Cler. sen. Remember your orders, distance becomes no man but an husband.

Fain. I am glad you are in so good humour on the occasion; but you know me to be but a bully in love, that can bluster only till the minute of engagement—But I'll top my part, and form my conduct by my own sentiments—If she grows coy, I'll grow more saucy—'Twas so I was won myself.

Cler. sen. Well, my dear rival—your assignation draws nigh—you are to put on your transport, your impatient throbbing heart won't let you wait her arrival—let the dull family-thing and husband, who reckons his moments by his cares, be content to wait; but you are a gallant, and measure time by ecstasies.

Fain. I hear her coming—to your post—good husband, know your duty, and don't be in the way when your wife has a mind to be in private—to your post, into the coal-hole.

Enter Mrs. CLERIMONT.

Welcome my dear, my tender charmer—Oh! to my longing arms—feel the heart pant, that falls and rises as you smile or frown—Oh, the ecstatic moment!—I think that was something like what has been said to me. *[Aside.*

Mrs. C. Very well—Fainlove—I protest I value myself for my discerning—I knew you had fire through all the respect you showed me.—But how came you to make no direct advances, young gentleman?—why was I forced to admonish your gallantry.

Fain. Why, madam, I knew you a woman of breeding, and above the senseless niceties of an English wife. The French way is, you are to go so far, whether they are agreeable or not: if you are so happy as to please, nobody that is not of a constrain'd behaviour, is at a loss to let you know it—besides, if the humble servant makes the first approaches, he has the impudence of

SCENE 1. TENDER HUSBAND.

making a request, but not the honour of obey command.

Mrs. C. Right—a woman's man should conce sion in a familiar air of indifference. Now Mr. Clerimont; I can't allow him the least freedom but the unfashionable fool grows so fond of cannot hide it in public.

Fain. Ay, madam, I have often wondered a ladyship's choice of one who seems to have so the-beau monde in his carriage, but just what you him to—while there were so many pretty gentlemen [D

Mrs. C. O, young gentleman, you are might taken, if you think such animals as you, and beau Titmouse, and pert Billy Butterfly, th suffer you to come in, and play about my room any ways in competition with a man whose would wear.

Fain. Oh! madam! then I find we are *Mrs. C.* A woman of sense must have respect man of that character; but, alas! respect— is respect is not the thing—respect has some solemn for soft moments—You things are mor for hours of dalliance.

Cler. sen. [Peeping] How have I wronged lady!—I find I am to be a cuckold out of esteem for me.

Mrs. C. Besides, those fellows for whom respect, have none for us; I warrant on such sion Clerimont would have ruffled a woman of form, while you—

Cler. sen. A good hint—now my cause o

Fain. Since, then, you allow us fitter me ments, why do we misemploy 'em. Let for beauteous hand, and clasp that graceful frame

Mrs. C. How, Fainlove! What, you don't be impertinent—but my lips have a certain on 'em to day, han't they?

Fain. [*Kissing*] No—they are all softness—their delicious sweetness is inexpressible.—Here language fails—let me applaud thy lips not by the utterance but by the touch of mine.

Enter CLERIMONT, Senior, drawing his Sword.

Cler. sen. Ha, villain! ravisher! invader of my bed and honour! draw.

Mrs. C. What means this insolence, this intrusion into my privacy? What, do you come into my very closet without knocking? Who put this into your head?

Cler. sen. My injuries have alarm'd me, and I'll bear no longer, but sacrifice your bravado, the author of 'em.

Mrs. C. O poor Mr. Fainlove—Must he die for his complaisance, and innocent freedoms with me? How could you, if you might? Oh! the sweet youth! What, fight Mr. Fainlove? What will the ladies say?

Fain. Let me come at the intruder on ladies' private hours—the unfashionable monster—I'll prevent all future interruption from him—let me come.

[Drawing his Sword.]

Mrs. C. O the brave pretty creature! Look at his youth and innocence—He is not made for such rough encounters—Stand behind me—Poor Fainlove!—There is not a visit in town, sir, where you shall not be displayed at full length for this intrusion—I banish you for ever from my sight and bed.

Cler. sen. I obey you, madam, for distance is becoming in no man but an husband. [*Giving her the Letter, which she reads, and falls into a Swoon*] I've gone too far. [*Kissing her*] The impertinent was guilty of nothing but what my indiscretion led her to—This is the first kiss I've had these six weeks—but she awakes.—Well, Jenny, you topp'd your part, indeed! Come to my arms thou ready willing fair one—thou hast no vanities, no piques; but art thankful for every instance of love that I bestow on thee.

[Embracing her.]

Mrs. C. What, am I then abused? Is it a wench then of his? Oh me! Was ever poor abused wife, poor innocent lady thus injured!

[*Runs and seizes Fainlove's Sword.*]

Cler. sen. Oh the brave pretty creature!—Hurt Mr. Fainlove! Look at his youth, his innocence—Ha! ha!

[*Interposing.*]

Fain. Have a care, have a care, dear sir—I know myself she'll have no mercy.

Mrs. C. I'll be the death of her—let me come on.—Stand from between us, Mr. Clerimont, I would not hurt you.

[*Pushing and crying.*]

Cler. sen. Run, run, Jenny. [*Exit Jenny. Looks at Mrs. C. upbraidingly before he speaks*] Well, madam, are these the innocent freedoms you claim'd of me? Have I deserved this? How has there been a moment of yours ever interrupted with the real pangs I suffer? The daily importunities of creditors, who become so by serving your profuse vanities: did I ever murmur at supplying any of your diversions, while I believed 'em (as you call'd 'em) harmless? must, then, those eyes, that used to glad my heart with their familiar brightness, hang down with guilt? Guilt has transform'd thy whole person; nay the very memory of it—Fly from my growing passion.

Mrs. C. I cannot fly, nor bear it—Oh! look not.

Cler. sen. What can you say? speak quickly.

[*Offering to draw.*]

Mrs. C. I never saw you moved before—Don't murder me, impenitent; I'm wholly in your power as a criminal, but remember I have been so in a tender regard.

Cler. sen. But how have you consider'd that regard?

Mrs. C. Is't possible you can forgive what you ensnared me into?—Oh! look at me kindly—You know I have only err'd in my intention, nor saw my danger, till, by this honest art, you had shown me what 'tis to venture to the utmost limit of what is lawful. You laid that train, I'm sure, to alarm, not to betray, my

innocence—Mr. Clerimont scorns such baseness! therefore I kneel—I weep, I am convinced.

[*Kneels. Cler. sen. takes her up embracing her.*

Cler. sen. Then kneel, and weep no more—my fairest—my reconciled!—Be so in a moment; for know I cannot, without wringing my own heart, give you the least compunction—Be in humour—It shall be your own fault, if ever there's a serious word more on this subject.

Mrs. C. I must correct every idea that rises in my mind, and learn every gesture of my body anew—I detest the thing I was.

Cler. sen. No, no, you must not do so—our joy and grief, honour and reproach, are the same; you must slide out of your foppery, by degrees, so that it may appear your own act.

Mrs. C. But this wench!

Cler. sen. She is already out of your way—You shall see the catastrophe of her fate yourself—But still keep up the fine lady till we go out of town—You may return to it with as decent airs as you please. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room. A Table, Chairs, Pen, Ink, and Paper.

Enter POUNCE, with Papers.

Pounce. 'Tis a delight to gall these old rascals, and set 'em at variance about stakes, which I know neither of 'em will ever have possession of.

Enter TIPKIN, and SIR HARRY.

Tip. Do you design, sir Harry, that they shall have an estate in their own hands, and keep house themselves, poor things?

Sir H. No, no, sir, I know better; they shall go down into the country, and live with me; not touch a farthing of money, but having all things necessary provided, they shall go tame about the house, and breed.

Tip. Well, sir Harry, then considering that all human things are subject to change, it behoves every man that has a just sense of mortality, to take care of his money.

Sir H. I don't know what you mean, brother—What do you drive at, brother?

Tip. This instrument is executed by you, your son, and my niece, which discharges me of all retrospects.

Sir H. It is confess'd, brother; but what then?

Tip. All that remains is, that you pay me for the young lady's twelve years board, as also all other charges, as wearing apparel, &c.

Sir H. What is this you say? did I give you my discharge from all retrospects, as you call it, and after all do you come with this and t'other, and all that? I find you are, I tell you, sir, to your face, I find you are——

Tip. I find, too, what you are, sir Harry.

Sir H. What am I, sir? what am I?

Tip. Why, sir, you are angry.

Sir H. Sir, I scorn your words, I am not angry—Mr. Pounce is my witness, I am as gentle as a lamb—Would it not make any flesh alive angry, to see a close hunk come after all with a demand of——

Tip. Mr. Pounce, pray inform sir Harry in this point.

Pounce. Indeed, sir Harry, I must tell you plainly, that Mr. Tipkin, in this, demands nothing but what he may recover—For though this case may be consider'd *multifariam*; that is to say, as 'tis usually, commonly, *vicatim*, or vulgarly express'd—Yet, I say, when we only observe, that the power is settled as the law requires, *assensu patris*, by the consent of the father—That circumstance imports you are well acquainted with the advantage which accrue to your family, by this alliance, which corroborates Mr. Tipkin's demand, and avoids all objections that can be made.

Sir H. Why then, I find you are his adviser in all this.

Pounce. Look ye, sir Harry, to show you I love to

promote among my clients a good understanding; though Mr. Tipkin may claim four thousand pounds, I'll engage for him; and I know him so well, that he shall take three thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight pounds, four shillings, and eight-pence farthing.

Tip. Indeed, Mr. Pounce, you are too hard upon me.

Pounce. You must consider a little, sir Harry is your brother.

Sir H. Three thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight pounds, four shillings, and eight-pence farthing! for what, I say? for what, sir?

Pounce. For what, sir! for what she wanted, sir; a fine lady is always in want, sir; her very clothes would come to that money in half the time.

Sir H. Three thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight pounds, four shillings, and eight-pence farthing for clothes! pray how many suits does she wear out in a year?

Pounce. Oh dear, sir, a fine lady's clothes are not old by being worn, but by being seen.

Sir H. Well, I'll save her clothes for the future, after I have got her into the country; I'll warrant her she shall not appear more in this wicked town, where clothes are worn out by sight—And as to what you demand, I tell you, sir, 'tis extortion.

Tip. Sir Harry, do you accuse me of extortion?

Sir H. Yes, I say, extortion.

Tip. Mr. Pounce, write down that—There are very good laws provided against scandal and calumny; loss of reputation may tend to loss of money.

Pounce. Item, for having accused Mr. Tipkin of extortion.

Sir H. Nay, if you come to your items, look ye, Mr. Tipkin, this is an inventory of such goods as were left to my niece Bridget by her deceased father, and which I expect shall be forthcoming at her marriage to my son. Imprimis, A golden locket of her mother's, with something very ingenious in Latin on the inside of it. Item, A couple of muskets, with two shoulder-

belts and bandeliers. Item, A large silver candle-cup, with a true story engraven on it.

Pounce. But, sir Harry—

Sir H. Item, A base viol, with almost all the strings to it, and only a small hole on the back.

Pounce. But nevertheless, sir—

Sir H. This is the furniture of my brother's bed-chamber that follows—A suit of tapestry hangings, with the story of Judith and Holofernes, torn only where the head should have been off. An old bedstead curiously wrought about the posts, consisting of two load of timber. A hone, a bason, three razors, and a comb-case—Look ye, sir, you see I can item it.

Pounce. Alas! sir Harry, if you had ten quire of items, 'tis all answered in the word retrospect.

Sir H. Why then, Mr. Pounce and Mr. Tipkin, you are both rascals.

Tip. Do you call me rascal, sir Harry?

Sir H. Yes, sir.

Tip. Write it down, Mr. Pounce, at the end of the leaf.

Sir H. If you have room, Mr. Pounce, put down villain, son of a whore, curmudgeon, hunks, and soundrel.

Tip. Not so fast, sir Harry, he cannot write so fast; you are at the word villain—Son of a whore, I take it, was next—You may make the account as large as you please, sir Harry.

Sir H. Come, come, I won't be used thus—Hark ye, sirrah, draw! What do you do at this end of the town without a sword? Draw, I say.

Tip. Sir Harry, you are a military man, a colonel of the militia.

Sir H. I am so, sirrah, and will run such an extorting dog as you through the guts, to show the militia is useful.

Pounce. Oh dear, oh dear! how am I concerned to see persons of your figure thus moved—The wedding is coming in—We'll settle these things afterwards.

Tip. I am calm.

Sir H. Tipkin, live these two hours—but expect——

Enter HUMPHREY leading NIECE, MRS. CLERIMONT led by FAINLOVE, CAPTAIN CLERIMONT, and CLERIMONT, Senior.

Pounce. Who are these? Hey-day, who are these, sir Harry? ha!

Sir H. Some frolic, 'tis wedding-day——no matter.

Hump. Haw, haw! father——master uncle, come, you must stir your stumps, you must dance——Come, old lads, kiss the ladies——

Mrs. C. Mr. Tipkin, sir Harry, I beg pardon for an introduction so mal-a-propos; I know sudden familiarity is not the English way——Alas, Mr. Gubbin, this father and uncle of yours must be new modell'd; how they stare, both of them!

Sir H. Harkye, Numps, who is this you have brought hither? is it not the famous fine lady Mrs. Clerimont? What a pox did you let her come near your wife?

Hump. Look ye, don't expose yourself, and play some mad country prank to disgrace me before her; I shall be laughed at, because she knows I understand better.

Mrs. C. I congratulate, madam, your coming out of the bondage of a virgin state; a woman can't do what she will properly till she's married.

Sir H. Did you hear what she said to your wife?

Enter AUNT, before a Service of Dishes.

Aunt. So, Mr. Bridegroom, pray take that napkin, and serve your spouse to-day, according to custom.

Hump. Mrs. Clerimont, pray know my aunt.

Mrs. C. Madam, I must beg your pardon; I can't possibly like all that vast load of meat that you are sending in to table; besides, 'tis so offensively sweet, it wants that haut-gout we are so delighted with in France.

Aunt. You'll pardon it, since we did not expect you. Who is this?

[*Aside.*

Mrs. C. Oh, madam, I only speak for the future; little saucers are so much more polite—Look ye, I'm perfectly for the French way; whene'er I'm admitted, I take the whole upon me.

Sir H. The French, madam—I'd have you to know—

Mrs. C. You'll not like it at first, out of a natural English sullenness; but that will come upon you by degrees. When I first went into France, I was mortally afraid of a frog, but in a little time I could eat nothing else, except sallads.

Aunt. Eat frogs! have I kissed one that has eat frogs? paw! paw!

Mrs. C. Oh, madam! a frog and a sallad are delicious fare.

Hump. Now, father, uncle, before we go any further, I think 'tis necessary we know who and who's together; then I give either of you two hours to guess which is my wife—And 'tis not my cousin—so far I'll tell you.

Sir H. How! what do you say? But oh! you mean she is not your cousin now; she's nearer a-kin; that's well enough: Well said, Numps, ha, ha, ha!

Hump. No, I don't mean so, I tell you, I don't mean so—My wife hides her face under her hat.

[*All looking at Fainlove.*

Tip. What does the puppy mean? his wife under a hat!

Hump. Ay, ay, that's she, that's she; a good jest, faith.

Sir H. Harkye, Numps, what dost mean, child? Is that a woman, and are you really married to her?

Hump. I am sure of both.

Sir H. Are you so, sirrah? then, sirrah, this is your wedding-dinner, sirrah; do you see, sirrah, here's roast meat?

[*Shakes his Cane at Humphrey.*

Hump. Oh, oh! what, beat a married man! hold

him, Mr. Clerimont, brother Pounce, Mr. Wife; nobody stand by a young married man!

[Runs behind Fainlove.]

Sir H. Did not the dog say, brother Pounce? what, is this Mrs. Ragout, this madam Clerimont? Who the devil are you all, but especially who the devil are you too?

[Beats Humphrey and Fainlove off the Stage; Sir Harry follows.]

Tip. *[Aside]* Master Pounce, all my niece's fortune will be demanded now, for I suppose, that red coat has her. Don't you think that you and I had better break?

Pounce. You may as soon as you please, but 'tis my interest to be honest a little longer.

Tip. Well, Biddy, since you would not accept of your cousin, I hope you han't disposed of yourself elsewhere.

Niece. If you'll for a little while suspend your curiosity, you shall have the whole history of my amour to this my nuptial day, under the title of the loves of Clerimont and Partheniassa.

Tip. Then, madam, your portion is in safe hands.

Capt. C. Come, come, old gentleman, 'tis in vain to contend; here's honest Mr. Pounce shall be my engineer, and I warrant you, we beat you out of all your holds.

Aunt. What, then, is Mr. Pounce a rogue? he must have some trick, brother; it cannot be; he must have cheated t'other side, for I'm sure he's honest.

[Apart to Tipkin.]

Cler. sen. Mr. Pounce, all your sister has won of this lady, she has honestly put into my hands, and I'll return it her at this lady's particular request.

[To Pounce.]

Pounce. And the thousand pounds you promised in your brother's behalf, I'm willing should be hers also.

Re-enter FAINLOVE, HUMPHREY, and SIR HARRY.

Sir H. Well, since you say you are worth something,

and the boy has set his heart upon you, I'll have patience till I see further.

Pounce. Come, come, sir Harry, you shall find my alliance more considerable than you imagine; the Pouncoes are a family that will always have money, if there's any in the world.

You've seen th' extremes of the domestic life,
A son too much confin'd—too free a wife;
By generous bonds you either should restrain,
And only on their inclinations gain;
Wives to obey must love, children revere,
While only slaves are govern'd by their fear.

[*Exeunt.*]

EPILOGUE.

BRITONS, who constant war, with factious rage,
For liberty against each other wage,
From foreign insult save this *English* stage.
No more th' *Italian* squalling tribe admit,
In tongues unknown; 'tis popery in wit.
Ths songs (their selves confess), from *Rome* they bring,
And 'tis high-mass, for aught you know, they sing.
Husbands, take care, the danger may come nigher,
The women say their eunuch is a friar.

But is it not a serious ill to see
Europe's great arbiters so mean can be;
Passive, with an affected joy to sit,
Suspend their native taste of manly wit;
Neglect their comic humour, tragic rage,
For known defects of nature, and of age:
Arise from shame, ye conquering *Britons*, rise;
Such unadorn'd effeminacy despise;
Admire, (if you will dote on foreign wit)
Not what *Italians* sing, but *Romans* writ.
So shall less work, such as to-night's slight play,
At your command with justice die away;
Till then forgive your writers, that can't bear
You should such very *Tramontanes* appear,
The nations, which condemn you, to revere.

Let *Anna's* soil be known for all its charms;
As fam'd for liberal sciences, as arms:
Let those derision meet, who would advance
Manners or speech, from *Italy* or *France*.
Let them learn you, who would your favour find,
And *ENGLISH* be the language of mankind.

A
Trip to Scarborough.

A COMEDY.

BY THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

Author of several Dramatic Pieces, &c.



Printed at the Chiswick Press,

BY C. WHITTINGHAM;

**FOR WHITTINGHAM AND ARLISS, PATERNOSTER
ROW, LONDON.**

1815.



A TRIP TO SCARBOROUGH,

FIRST acted in 1777, is an alteration from Sir John Vanbrugh's play of the RELAPSE; or, VIRTUE IN DANGER, performed in 1697, as a sequel to Cibber's comedy of LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; or, THE FOOL IN FASHION.

The TRIP TO SCARBOROUGH, although an amusing comedy, has stood much less on its own merits than those of the several celebrated actresses who have successively performed the part of *Miss Hoyden*, and from Mrs. Abington to Mrs. Jordan the lady has been the chief attraction of the play.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. KING.

WHAT various transformations we remark,
From east Whitechapel, to the west Hyde-park!
Men, women, children, houses, signs, and fashions,
State, stage, trade, taste, the humours, and the passions;
Th' Exchange, 'Change-alley, wheresoe'er you're rang-
ing,

Court, city, country, all are chang'd or changing :
The streets, sometime ago, were pav'd with stones,
Which, aided by a hackney-coach, half broke your bones.
The purest lovers then indulg'd no bliss;
They run great hazard, if they stole a kiss.
One chaste salute—the damsel cried—*O fie!*
As they approach'd—slap went the coach awry—
Poor Sylvia got a bump, and Damon a black eye.

But now weak nerves in hackney-coaches roam,
And the cramm'd glutton snores, unjolted, home;
Of former times, that polish'd thing, a bean,
Is metamorphos'd now, from top to toe ;
Then the full flaxen wig, spread o'er the shoulders,
Conceal'd the shallow head from the beholders !
But now the whole's revers'd—each sop appears,
Cropp'd, and trimm'd up, exposing head and ears :
The buckle then its modest limits knew,
Now, like the ocean, dreadful to the view,
Hath broke its bounds, and swallows up the shoe ;
The wearers foot, like his once fine estate,
Is almost lost, th' encumbrance is so great.
Ladies may smile—are they not in the plot?
The bounds of nature have not they forgot?
Were they design'd to be, when put together,
Made up, like shuttle-cocks, of cork and feather?
'Their pale-fac'd grand-mammas appear'd with grace,
When dawning blushes rose upon the face ;
Now blushes now their once-lov'd station seek ;
The foe is in possession of the cheek !

No heads, of old, too high in feather'd state,
Hinder'd the fair to pass the lowest gate ;
A church to enter now, they must be bent,
If ever they should try th' experiment.

As change thus circulates throughout the nation,
Some plays may justly call for alteration ;
At least to draw some slender cov'ring o'er
That *graceless wit* * which was too bare before :
Those writers well and wisely use their pens,
Who turn our wantons into Magdalens ;
And howsoever wicked wits revile 'em,
We hope to find in you their stage asylum.

* And *Van* wants grace, who never wanted wit. POPE.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted.

<i>Lord Foppington</i>	Mr. Dodd.
<i>Str Tunbelly Clumsey</i>	Mr. Moody.
<i>Colonel Townly</i>	Mr. Brereton.
<i>Loveless</i>	Mr. Smith.
<i>Young Fashion</i>	Mr. J. Palmer.
<i>Probe</i>	Mr. Parsons.
<i>Jeweller</i>	Mr. Lamash.
<i>Shoemaker</i>	Mr. Carpenter.
<i>La Varole</i>	Mr. Burton.
<i>Tailor</i>	Mr. Parker.
<i>Mendlegs</i>	Mr. Norris.
<i>Lory</i>	Mr. Baddeley.
<i>Amanda</i>	Mrs. Robinson.
<i>Berinthia</i>	Miss Farren.
<i>Miss Hoyden</i>	Mrs. Abington.
<i>Mrs. Coupler</i>	Mrs. Booth.
<i>Nurse</i>	Mrs. Bradshaw.

Drury Lane, 1811. Covent Garden, 1814.

<i>Lord Foppington</i> . . .	Mr. Palmer.	Mr. Jones.
<i>Str Tunbelly Clumsey</i>	Mr. Penson.	Mr. Emery.
<i>Colonel Townly</i>	Mr. Holland.	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Loveless</i>	Mr. Wrench.	Mr. Abbott.
<i>Young Fashion</i>	Mr. De Camp.	Mr. Conway.
<i>Probe</i>	Mr. Wewitzer.	Mr. Simmons.
<i>Jeweller</i>	Mr. Fisher.	Mr. Brook.
<i>Shoemaker</i>	Mr. Penley.	Mr. King.
<i>La Varole</i>	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. Menage.
<i>Tailor</i>	Mr. Sparks.	Mr. Treby.
<i>Mendlegs</i>	Mr. Webb.	Mr. Lee.
<i>Lory</i>	Mr. Russell.	Mr. Blanchard.
<i>Countryman</i>	Mr. Oxberry.	Mr. Crumpton.
<i>Postillion</i>	Mr. Chatterley.	Mr. Sarjant.
<i>Servants</i>	{ Messrs. Evans and Hope.	
<i>Amanda</i>	Mrs. Orger.	Mrs. Egerton.
<i>Berinthia</i>	Miss Duncan.	Mrs. H. Johnstone.
<i>Miss Hoyden</i>	Mrs. Edwin.	Mrs. Jordan.
<i>Mrs. Coupler</i>	Miss Tidswell.	Mrs. Coates.
<i>Nurse</i>	Mrs. Sparks.	Mrs. Davenport.
<i>Sempstress</i>	Mrs. Chatterley.	Miss Standon.
<i>Maid</i>	Miss Jones.	Miss Cox.

Scene—SCARBOROUGH.

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. *The Hall of an Inn.*

Enter Young FASHION and LORY, Postillion following with a Portmanteau.

Young F. LORY, pay the post-boy, and take the portmanteau.

Lory. Faith, sir, we had better let the post-boy take the portmanteau and pay himself.

Young F. Why sure there's something left in it.

Lory. Not a rag, upon my honour, sir—we eat the last of your wardrobe at Newmalton—and if we had had twenty miles further to go, our next meal must have been of the cloak-bag.

Young F. Why, 'sdeath, it appears full.

Lory. Yes, sir—I made bold to stuff it with hay, to save appearances, and look like baggage.

Young F. What the devil shall I do?—harkee, boy, what's the chaise?

Post. Thirteen shillings, please your honour.

Young F. Can you give me change for a guinea?

Post. O yes, sir.

Lory. Soh, what will he do now?—Lord, sir, you had better let the boy be paid below.

Young F. Why, as you say, Lory, I believe it will be as well.

Lory. Yes, yes; I'll tell them to discharge you below, honest friend.

Post. Please your honour, there are the turnpikes too.

Young F. Ay, ay, the turnpikes by all means.

Post. And I hope your honour will order me something for myself.

Young F. To be sure; bid them give you a crown.

Lory. Yes, yes—my master doesn't care what you charge them—so get along you—

Post. And there's the hostler, your honour.

Lory. Pshaw! damn the hostler—would you impose upon the gentleman's generosity.—[Pushes him out]—A rascal, to be so ourst ready with his change!

Young F. Why, faith, Lory, he had nearly pos'd me.

Lory. Well, sir, we are arrived at Scarborough, not worth a guinea! I hope you'll own yourself a happy man—you have outliv'd all your cares.

Young F. How so, sir?

Lory. Why you have nothing left to take care of.

Young F. Yes, sirrah, I have myself and you to take care of still.

Lory. Sir, if you could prevail with somebody else to do that for you, I fancy we might both fare the better for it. But now, sir, for my lord Foppington, your elder brother.

Young F. Damn my eldest brother.

Lory. With all my heart; but get him to redeem your annuity, however. Look you, sir, you must wheedle him, or you must starve.

Young F. Look you, sir, I will neither wheedle him nor starve.

Lory. Why what will you do, then?

Young F. Cut his throat, or get some one to do it for me.

Lory. 'Gad so, sir, I'm glad to find I was not so well

acquainted with the strength of your conscience as with the weakness of your purse.

Young F. Why, art thou so impenetrable a block-head as to believe he'll help me with a farthing?

Lory. Not if you treat him *de haut en bas*, as you used to do.

Young F. Why, how wouldst have me treat him?

Lory. Like a trout—tickle him.

Young F. I can't flatter.

Lory. Can you starve?

Young F. Yes.

Lory. I can't—good-by t'ye, sir.

Young F. Stay—thou'lt distract me. But who comes here—my old friend, colonel Townly.

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

My dear colonel, I am rejoiced to meet you here.

Col. T. Dear Tom, this is an unexpected pleasure—what, are you come to Scarborough to be present at your brother's wedding?

Lory. Ah, sir, if it had been his funeral, we should have come with pleasure.

Col. T. What, honest Lory, are you with your master still?

Lory. Yes, sir, I have been starving with him ever since I saw your honour last.

Young F. Why, Lory is an attach'd rogue—there's no getting rid of him.

Lory. True, sir, as my master says, there's no seducing me from his service, till he's able to pay me my wages. *[Aside.*

Young F. Go, go, sir—and take care of the baggage.

Lory. Yes, sir—the baggage!—O Lord! I suppose, sir, I must charge the landlord to be very particular where he stows this?

Young F. Got along, you rascal. *[Exit Lory, with the Portmanteau]* But, colonel, are you acquainted with my proposed sister-in-law?

Col. T. Only by character—her father, sir Tunbelly Clumsy, lives within a quarter of a mile of this place,

in a lonely old house, which nobody comes near. She never goes abroad, nor sees company at home; to prevent all misfortunes, she has her breeding within doors; the parson of the parish teaches her to play upon the dulcimer, the clerk to sing, her nurse to dress, and her father to dance;—in short, nobody has free admission there but our old acquaintance, mother Coupler, who has procured your brother this match, and is, I believe, a distant relation of sir Tunbelly's.

Young F. But is her fortune so considerable?

Col. T. Three thousand a year, and a good sum of money, independent of her father, beside.

Young F. 'Sdeath! that my old acquaintance, dame Coupler, could not have thought of me, as well as my brother, for such a prize.

Col. T. 'Egad, I wouldn't swear that you are too late—his lordship, I know, hasn't yet seen the lady—and, I believe, has quarrelled with his patroness.

Young F. My dear colonel, what an idea have you started!

Col. T. Pursue it if you can, and I promise you you shall have my assistance; for besides my natural contempt for his lordship, I have at present the enmity of a rival towards him.

Young F. What, has he been addressing your old flame, the widow Berinthia?

Col. T. Faith, Tom, I am at present most whimsically circumstanced. I came here a month ago to meet the lady you mention; but she failing in her promise, I, partly from pique and partly from idleness, have been diverting my chagrin by offering up incense to the beauties of Amanda, our friend Loveless's wife.

Young F. I never have seen her, but have heard her spoken of as a youthful wonder of beauty and prudence.

Col. T. She is so indeed; and Loveless being too careless and insensible of the treasure he possesses—my lodging in the same house has given me a thousand opportunities of making my assiduities acceptable: so that in less than a fortnight, I began to bear my disap-

pointment from the widow with the most Christian resignation.

Young F. And Berinthia has never appear'd?

Col. T. Oh, there's the perplexity; for just as I began not to care whether I ever saw her again or not, last night she arrived.

Young F. And instantly reassumed her empire?

Col. T. No, faith—we met—but the lady not condescending to give me any serious reasons for having fool'd me for a month; I left her in a huff.

Young F. Well, well, I'll answer for it she'll soon resume her power, especially as friendship will prevent your pursuing the other too far—but my coxcomb of a brother is an admirer of Amanda's too, is he?

Col. T. Yes, and I believe is most heartily despised by her—but come with me, and you shall see her and your old friend Loveless.

Young F. I must pay my respects to his lordship—perhaps you can direct me to his lodgings?

Col. T. Come with me; I shall pass by it.

Young F. I wish you could pay this visit for me, or could tell me what I should say to him.

Col. T. Say nothing to him—apply yourself to his bag, his sword, his feather, his snuff-box; and when you are well with them, desire him to lend you a thousand pounds, and I'll engage you prosper.

Young F. 'Sdeath and furies! why was that coxcomb thrust into the world before me? O fortune, fortune, thou art a jilt, by Gad. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A Dressing-room.*

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON, in his Nightgown, and LA VAROLE.

Lord F. Well, 'tis an unspeakable pleasure to be a man of quality—strike me dumb—even the boors of this northern spa have learn'd the respect due to a title.

[*Aside*] *La Varole!*

La Var. Mi lor—

Lord F. You han't yet been at Muddymoat-hall, to announce my arrival, have you?

La Var. Not yet, mi lor.

Lord F. Then you need not go till Saturday, [*Exit La Varole*] as I am in no particular haste to view my intended spousa—I shall sacrifice a day or two more to the pursuit of my friend Loveless's wife—Amanda is a charming creature—strike me ugly; and if I have any discernment in the world, she thinks no less of my lord Roppington.

Re-enter LA VAROLE.

La Var. Mi lor, de shoemaker, de tailor, de bonier, de sempstress, de peru, be all ready, if your lordship please to dress.

Lord F. 'Tis well; admit them.

La Var. Hey, messieurs, entrez.

Enter Tailor, Shoemaker, &c.

Lord F. So, gentlemen, I hope you have all taken pains to show yourselves masters in your professions?

Tai. I think I may presume to say, sir——

La Var. My lor, you clown you!

Tai. My lord, I ask your lordship's pardon, my lord. I hope, my lord, your lordship will be pleased to own I have brought your lordship as accomplished a suit of clothes as ever peer of England wore, my lord—will your lordship please to view 'em now?

Lord F. Ay; but let my people dispose the glasses so that I may see myself before and behind; for I love to see myself all round.

Whilst he puts on his Clothes, enter Young FASHION and LORY.

Young F. Hey-day! What the devil have we here?—Sure my gentleman's grown a favourite at court, he has got so many people at his levee. [*Apart.*

Lory. Sir, these people come in order to make him a favourite at court—they are to establish him with the ladies. [*Apart.*

Young F. Good heaven! to what an ebb of taste are women fallen, that it should be in the power of a laced coat to recommend a gallant to them! *[Apart.]*

Lory. Sir, tailors and hair-dressers debauch all the women. *[Apart.]*

Young F. Thou say'st true.—But now for my reception. *[Apart.]*

Lord F. Death, and eternal tortures! Sir—I say the coat is too wide here by a foot.

Tai. My lord, if it had been tighter, 'twould neither have hook'd nor button'd.

Lord F. Rat the hooks and buttons, sir! Can any thing be worse than this?—As Gad shall jedge me, it hangs on my shoulders like a chairman's surtout.

Tai. 'Tis not for me to dispute your lordship's fancy.

Lory. There, sir, observe what respect does. *[Apart.]*

Young F. Respect!—D—n him for a coxcomb—but let's accost him. *[Apart]* Brother, I'm your humble servant.

Lord F. O Lard, Tam, I did not expect you in England—Brother, I'm glad to see you—but what has brought you to Scarborough, Tam?—Look you, sir, *[To the Tailor]* I shall never be reconciled to this nauseous wrapping gown, therefore pray get me another suit with all possible expedition; for this is my eternal aversion. *[Exit Tailor]* Well but, Tam, you don't tell me what has driven you to Scarborough.—Mrs. Callico, are not you of my mind?

Semp. Directly, my lord.—I hope your lordship is pleased with your ruffles?

Lord F. In love with them, stab my vitals!—Bring my bill, you shall be paid to-morrow.

Semp. I humbly thank your lordship. *[Exit.]*

Lord F. Hark thee, shoemaker, these shoes an't ugly, but they don't fit me.

Shoe. My lord, I think they fit you very well.

Lord F. They hurt me just below the instep.

Shoe. *[Feels his Foot]* No, my lord, they don't hurt you there.

Lord F. I tell thee they pinch me execrably.

Shoe. Why then, my lord, if those shoes pinch you, I'll be d—n'd.

Lord F. Why, wilt thou undertake to persuade me I cannot feel?

Shoe. Your lordship may please to feel what you think fit, but that shoe does not hurt you—I think I understand my trade.

Lord F. Now, by all that's good and powerful, thou art an incomprehensible coxcomb—but thou makest good shoes, and so I'll bear with thee.

Shoe. My lord, I have work'd for half the people of quality in this town these twenty years, and 'tis very hard I shouldn't know when a shoe hurts, and when it don't.

Lord F. Well, pr'ythee be gone about thy business. [*Exit Shoemaker*] Mr. Mendlegs, a word with you.—The calves of these stockings are thicken'd a little too much; they make my legs look like a porter's.

Mend. My lord, methinks they look mighty well.

Lord F. Ay, but you are not so good a judge of those things as I am—I have studied them all my life—therefore pray let the next be the thickness of a crown-piece less.

Mend. Indeed, my lord, they are the same kind I had the honour to furnish your lordship with in town.

Lord F. Very possibly, Mr. Mendlegs; but that was in the beginning of the winter, and you should always remember, Mr. Hosier, that if you make a nobleman's spring legs as robust as his autumnal calves, you commit a manstrous impropriety, and make no allowance for the fatigues of the winter. [*Exit Hosier.*]

Jewel. I hope, my lord, those buckles have had the unspeakable satisfaction of being honoured with your lordship's approbation?

Lord F. Why, they are of a pretty fancy; but don't you think them rather of the smallest?

Jewel. My lord, they could not well be larger, to keep on your lordship's shoe.

Lord F. My good sir, you forget that these matters are not as they used to be: formerly, indeed, the buckle

was a sort of machine, intended to keep on the shoe; but the case is now quite reversed, and the shoe is of no earthly use, but to keep on the buckle.—Now give me my watches, and the business of the morning will be pretty well over. *[Exit Jeweller.]*

Young F. Well, Lory, what dost think on't?—a very friendly reception from a brother, after three years absence! *[Apart.]*

Lory. Why, sir, 'tis your own fault—here you have stood ever since you came in, and have not commended any one thing that belongs to him. *[Apart.]*

Young F. Nor ever shall, while they belong to a coxcomb. *[Apart]* Now your people of business are gone, brother, I hope I may obtain a quarter of an hour's audience of you.

Lord F. Faith, Tam, I must beg you'll excuse me at this time, for I have an engagement which I would not break for the salvation of mankind. Hey!—there!—is my carriage at the door?—You'll excuse me, brother. *[Going.]*

Young F. Shall you be back to dinner?

Lord F. As Gad shall judge me, I can't tell; for it is passible I may dine with some friends at Donner's.

Young F. Shall I meet you there? for I must needs talk with you.

Lord F. That I'm afraid mayn't be quite so praper; for those I commonly eat with are a people of nice conversation; and you know, Tam, your education has been a little at large—but there are other ordinaries in town—very good beef ordinaries—I suppose, Tam, you can eat beef?—However, dear Tam, I'm glad to see thee in England, stap my vitals! *[Exit.]*

Young F. Hell and furies! Is this to be borne?

Lory. Faith, sir, I could almost have given him a knock o'the pate myself.

Young F. 'Tis enough; I will now show you the excess of my passion, by being very calm.—Come, Lory, lay your loggerhead to mine, and, in cold blood, let us contrive his destruction.

Lory. Here comes a head, sir, would contrive it bet-

ter than both our loggerheads, if she would but join in the confederacy.

Young F. By this light, madam Coupler; she seems dissatisfied at something: let us observe her.

Enter MRS. COUPLER.

Mrs. C. Soh! I am likely to be well rewarded for my services truly; my suspicions, I find, were but too just.—What! refuse to advance me a petty sum, when I am upon the point of making him master of a galleon! But let him look to the consequences, an ungrateful, narrow-minded coxcomb.

Young F. So he is, upon my soul, old lady; it must be my brother you speak of.

Mrs. C. Ha!—stripling, how came you here? What, hast spent all, eh? And art thou come to dun his lordship for assistance?

Young F. No, I want somebody's assistance to cut his lordship's throat, without the risk of being hang'd for him.

Mrs. C. 'Egad, sirrah, I could help thee to do him almost as good a turn, without the danger of being burn'd in the hand for't.

Young F. How—how, old Mischief?

Mrs. C. Why, you must know I have done you the kindness to make up a match for your brother.

Young F. I'm very much beholden to you, truly!

Mrs. C. You may before the wedding-day yet: the lady is a great heiress, the match is concluded, the writings are drawn, and his lordship is come hither to put the finishing hand to the business.

Young F. I understand as much.

Mrs. C. Now you must know, stripling, your brother's a knave.

Young F. Good.

Mrs. C. He has given me a bond of a thousand pounds for helping him to this fortune, and has promised me as much more, in ready money, upon the day of the marriage; which, I understand by a friend, he never designs to pay me; and his just now refusing to pay

me a part, is a proof of it. If therefore you will be a generous young rogue, and secure me five thousand pounds, I'll help you to the lady.

Young F. And how the devil wilt thou do that?

Mrs. C. Without the devil's aid, I warrant thee. Thy brother's face not one of the family ever saw; the whole business has been managed by me, and all his letters go through my hands. Sir Tunbelly Clumsey, my relation—for that's the old gentleman's name—is apprised of his lordship's being down here, and expects him to-morrow to receive his daughter's hand; but the peer, I find, means to bait here a few days longer, to recover the fatigue of his journey, I suppose. Now you shall go to Muddymoor-hall in his place.—I'll give you a letter of introduction: and if you don't marry the girl before sun-set, you deserve to be hang'd before morning.

Young F. Agreed, agreed; and for thy reward—

Mrs. C. Well, well;—though I warrant thou hast not a farthing of money in thy pocket now—no—one may see it in thy face.

Young F. Not a souze, by Jupiter.

Mrs. C. Must I advance then? Well, be at my lodgings, next door, this evening, and I'll see what may be done—we'll sign and seal, and when I have given thee some further instructions, thou shalt hoist sail and be gone. [Exit.]

Young F. So, Lory, fortune, thou seest, at last takes care of merit: we are in a fair way to be great people.

Lory. Ay, sir, if the devil don't step between the cup and the lip, as he used to do.

Young F. Why, faith, he has play'd me many a damn'd trick to spoil my fortune; and, 'egad, I am almost afraid he's at work about it again now; but if I should tell thee how, thou'dst wonder at me.

Lory. Indeed, sir, I should not.

Young F. How dost know?

Lory. Because, sir, I have wondered at you so often, I can wonder at you no more.

Young F. No!—What wouldst thou say, if a qualm of conscience should spoil my design?

Lory. I would eat my words, and wonder more than ever.

Young F. Why faith, *Lory*, though I have play'd many a roguish trick, this is so full-grown a cheat, I find I must take pains to come up to't—I have scruples.

Lory. They are strong symptoms of death. If you find they increase, sir, pray make your will.

Young F. No, my conscience shan't starve me neither; but thus far I'll listen to it. Before I execute this project, I'll try my brother to the bottom. If he has yet so much humanity about him as to assist me—though with a moderate aid—I'll drop my project at his feet, and show him how I can do for him much more than what I'd ask he'd do for me. This one conclusive trial of him I resolve to make.—

Succeed or fail, still vict'ry is my lot;

If I subdue his heart, 'tis well—if not,

I will subdue my conscience to my plot. [Exeunt.

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I.

Enter LOVELESS and AMANDA.

Love. How do you like these lodgings, my dear? For my part, I am so pleas'd with them, I shall hardly remove whilst we stay here, if you are satisfied.

Aman. I am satisfied with every thing that pleases you, else I had not come to Scarborough at all.

Love. O! a little of the noise and folly of this place will sweeten the pleasures of our retreat; we shall find the charms of our retirement doubled when we return to it.

Aman. That pleasing prospect will be my chiefest entertainment, whilst, much against my will, I engage in those empty pleasures which 'tis so much the fashion to be fond of.

Love. I own most of them are, indeed, but empty; yet there are delights of which a private life is destitute, which may divert an honest man, and be a harmless entertainment to a virtuous woman: good music is

one; and truly (with some small allowance) the plays, I think, may be esteemed another.

Aman. Plays, I must confess, have some small charms. What do you think of that you saw last night?

Love. To say truth, I did not mind it much—my attention was for some time taken off to admire the workmanship of nature, in the face of a young lady who sat some distance from me, she was so exquisitely handsome.

Aman. So exquisitely handsome!

Love. Why do you repeat my words, my dear?

Aman. Because you seem'd to speak them with such pleasure, I thought I might oblige you with their echo.

Love. Then you are alarmed, Amanda?

Aman. It is my duty to be so when you are in danger.

Love. You are too quick in apprehending for me. I view'd her with a world of admiration, but not one glance of love.

Aman. Take heed of trusting to such nice distinctions. But were your eyes the only things that were inquisitive? Had I been in your place, my tongue, I fancy, had been curious too. I should have ask'd her where she liv'd—yet still without design—who was she, pray?

Love. Indeed I cannot tell.

Aman. You will not tell.

Love. Upon my honour then, I did not ask.

Aman. Nor do you know what company was with her?

Love. I do not. But why are you so earnest?

Aman. I thought I had cause.

Love. But you thought wrong, Amanda; for turn the case, and let it be your story: should you come home and tell me you had seen a handsome man, should I grow jealous because you had eyes?

Aman. But should I tell you he was exquisitely so, and that I had gazed on him with admiration, should

you not think 'twere possible I might go one step further, and inquire his name?

Love. She has reason on her side; I have talk'd too much; but I must turn off another way. [*Aside*] Will you then make no difference, Amanda, between the language of our sex and yours? There is a modesty restrains your tongues, which makes you speak by halves when you commend; but roving flattery gives a loose to ours, which makes us still speak double what we think.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, there is a lady at the door in a chair desires to know whether your ladyship sees company? her name is Berinthia.

Aman. Oh dear! 'tis a relation I have not seen these five years, pray her to walk in. [*Exit Servant*] Here's another beauty for you; she was, when I saw her last, reckoned extremely handsome.

Love. Don't be jealous now; for I shall gaze upon her too.

Enter BERINTHIA.

Ha! by heavens, the very woman! [*Aside.*

Ber. [*Salutes Amanda*] Dear Amanda, I did not expect to meet you in Scarborough.

Aman. Sweet cousin, I'm overjoyed to see you.—*Mr. Loveless*, here's a relation and a friend of mine, I desire you'll be better acquainted with.

Love. [*Salutes Berinthia*] If my wife never desires a harder thing, madam, her request will be easily granted.

Re-enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lord Foppington presents his humble service to you, and desires to know how you do. He's at the next door; and if it be not inconvenient to you, he'll come and wait upon you.

Love. Give my compliments to his lordship, and I shall be glad to see him. [*Exit Servant*] If you are not acquainted with his lordship, madam, you will be entertained with his character.

Aman. Now it moves my pity more than my mirth to see a man, whom nature has made no fool, be so very industrious to pass for an ass.

Love. No, there you are wrong, Amanda; you should never bestow your pity upon these who take pains for your contempt: pity those whom nature abuses, never those who abuse nature.

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON.

Lord F. Dear Loveless, I am your most humble servant.

Love. My lord, I'm yours.

Lord F. Madam, your ladyship's very obedient slave.

Love. My lord, this lady is a relation of my wife's.

Lord F. [*Salutes her*] The beautifullest race of people upon earth, rat me. Dear Loveless, I am overjoyed that you think of continuing here. I am, stap my vitals.—For Gad's sake, madam, how has your ladyship been able to subsist thus long, under the fatigue of a country life? [*To Amanda.*]

Aman. My life has been very far from that, my lord, it has been a very quiet one.

Lord F. Why that's the fatigue I speak of, madam; for 'tis impossible to be quiet, without thinking: now thinking is to me the greatest fatigue in the world.

Aman. Does not your lordship love reading then?

Lord F. Oh, passionately, madam; but I never think of what I read. For example, madam, my life is a perpetual stream of pleasure, that glides through with such a variety of entertainments, I believe the wisest of our ancestors never had the least conception of any of 'em. I rise, madam, when in tawn, about twelve o'clock. I don't rise sooner, because it is the worst thing in the world for the complexion: nat that I pretend to be a bean; but a man must endeavour to look decent, lest he makes so odious a figure in the side-box, the ladies should be compelled to turn their eyes upon the play. So at twelve o'clock, I say, I rise. Naw, if I find it is a good day, I resolve to

take the exercise of riding; so drink my chocolate, and draw on my boots, by two. On my return, I dress; and after dinner, lounge perhaps to the opera.

Ber. Your lordship, I suppose, is fond of music?

Lord F. Oh, passionately, on Tuesdays and Saturdays; for then there is always the best company, and one is not expected to undergo the fatigue of listening.

Aman. Does your lordship think that the case at the opera?

Lord F. Most certainly, madam. There is my lady Tattle, my lady Prate, my lady Titter, my lady Sneer, my lady Giggle, and my lady Grin—these have boxes in the front, and while any favourite air is singing, are the prettiest company in the waurld, stap my vitals! Mayn't we hope for the honour to see you added to our society, madam?

Aman. Alas, my lord, I am the worst company in the world at a concert, I'm so apt to attend to the music.

Lord F. Why, madam, that is very pardonable in the country or at church, but a monstrous inattention in a polite assembly. But I am afraid I tire the company?

Love. Not at all. Pray go on.

Lord F. Why then, ladies, there only remains to add, that I generally conclude the evening at one or other of the clubs; nat that I ever play deep; indeed I have been for some time tied up from losing above five thousand paunds at a sitting.

Love. But isn't your lordship sometimes obliged to attend the weighty affairs of the nation?

Lord F. Sir, as to weighty affairs, I leave them to weighty heads; I never intend mine shall be a burden to my body.

Ber. Nay, my lord, but you are a pillar of the state.

Lord F. An ornamental pillar, madam; for sooner than undergo any part of the fatigue, rat me, but the whole building should fall plump to the ground.

Aman. But, my lord, a fine gentleman spends a great deal of his time in his intrigues; you have given us no account of them yet.

Lord F. Soh! She would inquire into my amours—that's jealousy, poor soul!—I see she's in love with me. [*Aside*] O Lord, madam, I had like to have forgot a secret I must needs tell your ladyship.—Ned, you must not be so jealous now as to listen.

Love. Not I, my lord, I am too fashionable a husband to pry into the secrets of my wife.

Lord F. [*Squeezing Amanda's Hand*] I am in love with you to desperation, strike me speechless! [*Apart.*

Aman. [*Strikes him on the Ear*] Then thus I return your passion, an impudent fool!

Lord F. Gad's curse, madam, I am a peer of the realm.

Love. Hey! what the devil, do you affront my wife, sir? Nay then—— [*Draws. They fight.*

Aman. What has my folly done?—Help! murder! help! Part them, for heaven's sake.

Lord F. [*Falls back and leans on his Sword*] Ah! quite through the body, stap my vitals!

Enter Servants.

Love. [*Runs to Lord Foppington*] I hope I han't killed the fool, however.—Bear him up—Call a surgeon there.

Lord F. Ay, pray make haste.

Love. This mischief you may thank yourself for.

Lord F. I may so; love's the devil indeed, Ned.

Enter PROBE and Servant.

Serv. Here's Mr. Probe, sir, was just going by the door.

Lord F. He's the welcomest man alive.

Probe. Stand by, stand by, stand by; pray, gentlemen, stand by. Lord have mercy upon us, did you never see a man run through the body before?—Pray stand by.

Lord F. Ah, Mr. Probe, I'm a dead man.

Probe. A dead man, and I by! I should laugh to see that, 'egad.

Love. Pr'ythee, don't stand prating, but look upon his wound.

Probe. Why, what if I won't look upon his wound this hour, sir?

Love. Why then he'll bleed to death, sir.

Probe. Why then I'll fetch him to life again, sir.

Love. 'Slife! he's run through the body, I tell thee.

Probe. I wish he was run through the heart, and I should get the more credit by his cure. Now I hope you are satisfied? Come, now let me come at him—now let me come at him [*Viewing his Wound*]*—Oons!* what a gash is here! Why, sir, a man may drive a coach and six horses into your body.

Lord F. Oh!

Probe. Why, what the devil have you run the gentleman through with a scythe?—A little scratch between the skin and the ribs, that's all. [*Aside.*

Love. Let me see his wound.

Probe. Then you shall dress it, sir; for if any body looks upon it I wont.

Love. Why thou art the veriest coxcomb I ever saw.

Probe. Sir, I am not master of my trade for nothing.

Lord F. Surgeon!

Probe. Sir.

Lord E. Are there any hopes?

Probe. Hopes! I can't tell. What are you willing to give for a cure?

Lord F. Five hundred paunds with pleasure.

Probe. Why then perhaps there may be hopes; but we must avoid a further delay—Here, help the gentleman into a chair, and carry him to my house presently—that's the properest place—to bubble him out of his money.—[*Aside*]*—Come, a chair—a chair quickly—there, in with him.* [*They put him into a Chair.*

Lord F. Dear Loveless, adieu: if I die, I forgive thee; and, if I live, I hope thou wilt do as much by

me. I am sorry you and I should quarrel, but I hope here's an end on't; for if you are satisfied, I am.

Love. I shall hardly think it worth my prosecuting any further, so you may be at rest, sir.

Lord F. Thou art a generous fellow, strike me dumb—but thou hast an impertinent wife, stap my vitals!—

[*Aside.*

Probe. So—carry him off—carry him off—we shall have him prate himself into a fever by-and-by—carry him off.

[*Exit, with Lord Foppington.*

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

Col. T. So, so, I am glad to find you all alive—I met a wounded peer carrying off. For heaven's sake what was the matter?

Love. O, a trifle—he would have made love to my wife before my face, so she obliged him with a box o'the ear, and I run him through the body, that was all.

Col. T. Bagatelle on all sides. But pray, madam, how long has this noble lord been an humble servant of yours?

Aman. This is the first I have heard on't—so I suppose 'tis his quality more than his love has brought him into this adventure. He thinks his title an authentic passport to every woman's heart below the degree of a peeress.

Col. T. He's coxcomb enough to think any thing; but I would not have you brought into trouble for him—I hope there's no danger of his life?

Love. None at all—he's fallen into the hands of a roguish surgeon, who, I perceive, designs to frighten a little money out of him—but I saw his wound—'tis nothing—he may go to the ball to-night if he pleases.

Col. T. I am glad you have corrected him without further mischief, or you might have deprived me of the pleasure of executing a plot against his lordship, which I have been contriving with an old acquaintance of yours.

Love. Explain——

Col. T. His brother, Tom Fashion, is come down here, and we have it in contemplation to save him the trouble of his intended wedding; but we want your assistance. Tom would have called, but he is preparing for his enterprize, so I promised to bring you to him—so, sir, if these ladies can spare you——

Love. I'll go with you with all my heart [*Aside*]
—though I could wish, methinks, to stay and gaze a little longer on that creature—Good gods! how engaging she is—but what have I to do with beauty? I have already had my portion, and must not covet more.

Aman. Mr. Loveless, pray one word with you before you go. [*Exit Colonel Townly.*]

Love. What would my dear?

Aman. Only a woman's foolish question, how do you like my cousin here?

Love. Jealous already, Amanda?

Aman. Not at all—I ask you for another reason.

Love. Whate'er her reason be, I must not tell her true. [*Aside*]
—Why, I confess she's handsome: but you must not think I slight your kinswoman, if I own to you, of all the women who may claim that character, she is the last that would triumph in my heart.

Aman. I'm satisfied.

Love. Now tell me why you ask'd?

Aman. At night I will—adieu.

Love. I'm yours.

[*Kissing her. Exit.*]

Aman. I'm glad to find he does not like her, for I have a great mind to persuade her to come and live with me. [*Aside.*]

Ber. So! I find my colonel continues in his airs; there must be something more at the bottom of this than the provocation he pretends from me. [*Aside.*]

Aman. For heaven's sake, Berinthia, tell me what way I shall take to persuade you to come and live with me?

Ber. Why one way in the world there is—and but one.

Aman. And pray what is that?

Ber. It is to assure me—I shall be very welcome.

Aman. If that be all, you shall e'en sleep here to-night.

Ber. To-night!

Aman. Yes, to-night.

Ber. Why the people where I lodge will think me mad.

Aman. Let 'em think what they please.

Ber. Say you so, Amanda?—Why then they shall think what they please—for I'm a young widow, and I care not what any body thinks.—Ah, Amanda, it's a delicious thing to be a young widow.

Aman. You'll hardly make me think so.

Ber. Poh! because you are in love with your husband.

Aman. Pray, 'tis with a world of innocence I would inquire whether you think those we call women of reputation, do really escape all other men as they do those shadows of beaux?

Ber. Oh no, Amanda; there are a sort of men make dreadful work amongst 'em—men that may be called the beau's antipathy—for they agree in nothing but walking upon two legs. These have brains—the beau has none. These are in love with their mistress—the beau with himself. They take care of their reputation, the beau is industrious to destroy it. They are decent—he's a fop; in short, they are men—he's an ass.

Aman. If this be their character, I fancy we had here, e'en now, a pattern of 'em both.

Ber. His lordship and colonel Townly?

Aman. The same.

Ber. As for the lord, he is eminently so; and for the other, I can assure you there's not a man in town who has a better interest with the women, that are worth having an interest with.

Aman. He answers the opinion I had ever of him—*[Takes her Hand]*—I must acquaint you with a secret—'tis not that fool alone has talked to me of love, Townly has been tampering too.

Ber. So, so! here the mystery comes out! [*Aside*] Colonel Townly!—impossible, my dear!

Aman. 'Tis true, indeed; though he has done it in vain; nor do I think that all the merit of mankind combined, could shake the tender love I bear my husband; yet I will own to you, Berinthia, I did not start at his addresses, as when they came from one whom I contemned.

Ber. O this is better and better—[*Aside*]—Well said, innocence! and you really think, my dear, that nothing could abate your constancy and attachment to your husband?

Aman. Nothing, I am convinced.

Ber. What if you found he lov'd another woman better?

Aman. Well!

Ber. Well!—why were I that thing they call a slighted wife, somebody should run the risk of being that thing they call—a husband.—Don't I talk madly?

Aman. Madly indeed!

Ber. Yet I'm very innocent.

Aman. That I dare swear you are. I know how to make allowances for your humour—but you resolve then never to marry again?

Ber. Oh no!—I resolve I will.

Aman. How so?

Ber. That I never may.

Aman. You banter me.

Ber. Indeed I don't—but I consider I'm a woman, and form my resolutions accordingly.

Aman. Well, my opinion is, form what resolution you will, matrimony will be the end on't.

Ber. I doubt it—but a——Heavens! I have business at home, and am half an hour too late.

Aman. As you are to return with me, I'll just give some orders, and walk with you.

Ber. Well, make haste, and we'll finish this subject as we go.—[*Exit Amanda*]—Ah, poor Amanda, you have led a country life. Well, this discovery is lucky!

Base Townly!—at once false to me and treacherous to his friend! and my innocent and demure cousin too! I have it in my power to be revenged on her however. Her husband, if I have any skill in countenance, would be as happy in my smiles, as Townly can hope to be in hers. I'll make the experiment, come what will on't. The woman who can forgive the being robb'd of a favoured lover, must be either an idiot or a wanton.

[Exit.

ACT THE THIRD.



SCENE I.

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON *and* LA VAROLE.

Lord F. Hey, fellow, let my vis-a-vis come to the door.

La Var. Will your lordship venture so soon to expose yourself to the weather?

Lord F. Sir, I will venture as soon as I can to expose myself to the ladies.

La Var. I wish your lordship would please to keep house a little longer; I'm afraid your honour does not well consider your wound.

Lord F. My wound!—I would not be in eclipse another day, though I had as many wounds in my body as I have had in my heart. So mind, Varole, let these cards be left as directed; for this evening I shall wait on my father-in-law, sir Tunbelly, and I mean to commence my devoirs to the lady, by giving an entertainment at her father's expense; and hark thee, tell Mr. Loveless I request he and his company will honour

me with their presence, or I shall think we are not friends.

La Var. I will be sure, mi lor.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Young FASHION.

Young F. Brother, your servant; how do you find yourself to-day?

Lord F. So well that I have ardered my coach to the door—so there's no danger of death this baut, Tam.

Young F. I'm very glad of it.

Lord F. That I believe's a lie. [*Aside*]*—*Pr'ythee, Tam, tell me one thing, did not your heart cut a caper up to your mauth, when you heard I was run through the bady?

Young F. Why do you think it should?

Lord F. Because I remember mine did so, when I heard my uncle was shot through the head.

Young F. It then did very ill.

Lord F. Pr'ythee, why so?

Young F. Because he used you very well.

Lord F. Well!—Naw, strike me dumb, he starv'd me; he has let me want a thausand women, for want of a thausand paund.

Young F. Then he hinder'd you from making a great many ill bargains; for I think no woman worth money that will take money.

Lord F. If I was a younger brother I should think so too.

Young F. Then you are seldom much in love?

Lord F. Never, stap my vitals.

Young F. Why then did you make all this hustle about Amanda?

Lord F. Because she's a woman of an insolent virtue, and I thought myself piqu'd, in honour, to debauch her.

Young F. Very well.—Here's a rare fellow for you, to have the spending of ten thousand pounds a year. But now for my business with him. [*Aside*]*—*Brother, though I know to talk of business (especially of money) is a theme not-quite so entertaining to you as that of

the ladies, my necessities are such, I hope you'll have patience to hear me.

Lord F. The greatness of your necessities, Tam, is the worst argument in the waurld for your being patiently heard. I do believe you are going to make a very good speech, but strike me dumb, it has the worst beginning of any speech I have heard this twelvemonth.

Young F. I'm sorry you think so.

Lord F. I do believe thou art—but come, let's know the affair quickly.

Young F. Why then, my case in a word is this—The necessary expenses of my travels have so much exceeded the wretched income of my annuity, that I have been forced to mortgage it for five hundred pounds, which is spent. So, unless you are so kind as to assist me in redeeming it, I know no remedy but to take a purse.

Lord F. Why faith, Tam, to give you my sense of the thing, I do think taking a purse the best remedy in the waurld—for if you succeed you are relieved that way, if you are taken—you are relieved t'other.

Young F. I'm glad to see you are in so pleasant a humour; I hope I shall find the effects on't.

Lord F. Why, do you then really think it a reasonable thing, that I should give you five hundred pawnds?

Young F. I do not ask it as a due, brother; I am willing to receive it as a favour.

Lord F. Then thou art willing to receive it any how, strike me speechless.—But these are d——n'd times to give money in; taxes are so great, repairs so exorbitant, tenants such rogues, and boquets so dear, that the devil take me, I am reduced to that extremity in my cash, I have been forced to retrench in that one article of sweet pawder, till I have brought it dawns to five guineas a maunth—now judge, Tam, whether I can spare you five hundred pawnds?

Young F. If you can't I must starve, that's all.—
Damn him. { *Aside.*

all people were acquainted with their own bodies, though few people know their own minds.

Love. What if the distemper I suspect be in the mind?

Ber. Why then I'll undertake to prescribe you a cure.

Love. Alas! you undertake you know not what.

Ber. So far at least then you allow me to be a physician.

Love. Nay, I'll allow you to be so yet further; for I have reason to believe, should I put myself into your hands, you would increase my distemper.

Ber. How?

Love. Oh, you might betray me to my wife.

Ber. And so lose all my practice.

Love. Will you then keep my secret?

Ber. I will.

Love. Well—but swear it.

Ber. I swear by woman.

Love. Nay, that's swearing by my deity; swear by your own, and I shall believe you.

Ber. Well then, I swear by man!

Love. I'm satisfied. Now hear my symptoms, and give me your advice. The first were these, when I saw you at the play, a random glance you threw at first alarm'd me. I could not turn my eyes from whence the danger came—I gaz'd upon you till my heart began to pant—nay, even now on your approaching me, my illness is so increas'd, that if you do not help me I shall, whilst you look on, consume to ashes.

[Takes her Hand.]

Ber. O Lord, let me go; 'tis the plague, and we shall be infected.

[Breaking from him.]

Love. Then we'll die together, my charming angel.

Ber. O 'gad! the devil's in you. Lord, let me go—here's somebody coming.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lady's come home, and desires to speak with you.

Love. Tell her I'm coming. [*Exit Servant*].—But before I go, one glass of nectar to drink her health.

[*To Berinthia.*

Ber. Stand off, or I shall hate you, by heavens.

Love. [*Kissing her*] In matters of love, a woman's oath is no more to be minded than a man's. [*Exit.*

Ber. Um!

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

Col. T. Soh! what's here—Berinthia and Loveless—and in such close conversation!—I cannot now wonder at her indifference in excusing herself to me!—O rare woman—well then, let Loveless look to his wife, 'twill be but the retort courteous on both sides. Your servant, madam, I need not ask you how you do, you have got so good a colour.

Ber. No better than I used to have, I suppose.

Col. T. A little more blood in your cheeks.

Ber. I have been walking!

Col. T. Is that all? Pray was it Mr. Loveless went from here just now?

Ber. O yes—he has been walking with me.

Col. T. He has!

Ber. Upon my word I think he is a very agreeable man!—and there is certainly something particularly insinuating in his address!

Col. T. So, so! she has'n't even the modesty to dissemble! [*Aside*] Pray, madam, may I, without impertinence, trouble you with a few serious questions?

Ber. As many as you please; but pray let them be as little serious as possible.

Col. T. Is it not near two years since I have presumed to address you?

Ber. I don't know exactly—but it has been a tedious long time.

Col. T. Have I not, during that period, had every reason to believe that my assiduities were far from being unacceptable?

Ber. Why, to do you justice, you have been ex-

tremely troublesome—and I confess I have been more civil to you than you deserved.

Col. T. Did I not come to this place at your express desire, and for no purpose but the honour of meeting you?—and after waiting a month in disappointment, have you condescended to explain, or in the slightest way apologize, for your conduct?

Ber. O heavens! apologize for my conduct!—apologize to you!—O you barbarian!—But pray now, my good serious colonel, have you any thing more to add?

Col. T. Nothing, madam, but that after such behaviour I am less surprised at what I saw just now; it is not very wonderful that the woman who can trifle with the delicate addresses of an honourable lover, should be found coquetting with the husband of her friend.

Ber. Very true—no more wonderful than it was for this honourable lover to divert himself in the absence of this coquette, with endeavouring to seduce his friend's wife! O colonel, colonel, don't talk of honour or your friend, for heaven's sake.

Col. T. 'Sdeath! how came she to suspect this!—*[Aside]* Really, madam, I don't understand you.

Ber. Nay—nay—you saw I did not pretend to misunderstand you.—But here comes the lady—perhaps you would be glad to be left with her for an explanation.

Col. T. O madam, this recrimination is a poor resource; and to convince you how much you are mistaken, I beg leave to decline the happiness you propose me.—Madam, your servant.

Enter AMANDA. COLONEL TOWNLY whispers
AMANDA and exit.

Ber. He carries it off well, however—upon my word—very well!—how tenderly they part!—*[Aside]*—So, cousin—I hope you have not been chiding your admirer for being with me—I assure you we have been talking of you.

Aman. Fie, Berinthia!—my admirer—will you never learn to talk in earnest of any thing?

Ber. Why this shall be in earnest, if you please; for my part I only tell you matter of fact.

Aman. I'm sure there's so much jest and earnest in what you say to me on this subject, I scarce know how to take it.—I have just parted with Mr. Loveless—perhaps it is fancy, but I think there is an alteration in his manner which alarms me.

Ber. And so you are jealous? is that all?

Aman. That all!—is jealousy, then, nothing?

Ber. It should be nothing, if I were in your case.

Aman. Why, what would you do?

Ber. I'd cure myself.

Aman. How?

Ber. Care as little for my husband as he did for me. Look you, Amanda, you may build castles in the air, and fume, and fret, and grow thin, and lean, and pale, and ugly, if you please; but I tell you, no man worth having, is true to his wife, or ever was, or ever will be so.

Aman. Do you then really think he's false to me? for I did not suspect him.

Ber. Think so!—I am sure of it.

Aman. You are sure on't?

Ber. Positively—he fell in love at the play.

Aman. Right—the very same—but who could have told you this?

Ber. Um—O—Townly!—I suppose your husband has made him his confidant.

Aman. O base Loveless!—and what did Townly say on't?

Ber. So, so—why should she ask that? [*Aside*]—Say!—why he abused Loveless extremely, and said all the tender things of you in the world.

Aman. Did he?—Oh! my heart!—I'm very ill—dear Berinthia, don't leave me a moment. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *Outside of SIR TUNBELLY'S House.*

Enter Young FASHION and LORY.

Young F. So—here's our inheritance, Lory, if we can but get into possession—but methinks the seat of our family looks like Noah's ark, as if the chief part on't were designed for the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field.

Lory. Pray, sir, don't let your head run upon the orders of building here—get but the heiress, let the devil take the house.

Young F. Get but the house! let the devil take the heiress, I say—but come, we have no time to squander, knock at the door—[*Lory knocks two or three Times*].—What the devil have they got no ears in this house?—Knock harder.

Lory. 'Egad, sir, this will prove some enchanted castle—we shall have the giant come out, by-and-by, with his club, and beat our brains out. [*Knocks again.*]

Young F. Hush, they come.

Serv. [*Within*] Who is there?

Lory. Open the door and see—is that your country breeding?

Serv. Ay, but two words to that bargain—Tummas, is the blunderbuss prim'd?

Young F. Ouns! give 'em good words, Lory—or we shall be shot here a fortune catching.

Lory. 'Egad, sir, I think you're in the right on't—ho!—Mr. What-d'ye-call-'um—will you please to let us in? or are we to be left to grow like willows by your moat side?

Servant appears at the Window with a Blunderbuss.

Serv. Well naw, what's ya're business?

Young F. Nothing, sir, but to wait upon sir Tunbelly, with your leave.

Serv. To weat upon sir Tunbelly?—why you'll find that's just as sir Tunbelly pleases.

Young F. But will you do me the favour, sir, to know whether sir Tunbelly pleases or not?

Serv. Why, look you, d'ye see, with good words much may be done.—Ralph, go thy ways, and ask sir Tunbely if he pleases to be waited upon—and, dost hear, call to nurse, that she may lock up miss Hoyden before the gates open.

Young F. D'ye hear that, Lory?

Enter SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY, with Servants, armed with Guns, Clubs, Pitchforks, &c.

Lory. O! [*Runs behind his Master*] O Lord, O Lord, Lord, we are both dead men!

Young F. Fool! thy fear will ruin us.

[*Apart to Lory.*

Lory. My fear, sir? 'Sdeath, sir, I fear nothing.—
[*Apart*] Would I were well up to the chin in a horse-pond!

[*Aside.*

Sir T. Who is it here hath any business with me?

Young F. Sir, 'tis I, if your name be sir Tunbely Clumsy.

Sir T. Sir, my name is sir Tunbely Clumsy, whether you have any business with me or not.—So you see I am not asham'd of my name, nor my face either.

Young F. Sir, you have no cause, that I know of.

Sir T. Sir, if you have no cause either, I desire to know who you are; for, till I know your name, I shan't ask you to come into my house; and when I do know your name, 'tis six to four I don't ask you then.

Young F. Sir, I hope you'll find this letter an authentic passport.

[*Gives him a Letter.*

Sir T. Cod's my life, from Mrs. Coupler!—I ask your lordship's pardon ten thousand times—[*To his Servant*] Here, run in a-doors quickly; get a Scotch coal fire in the parlour, set all the Turkey-work chairs in their places, get the brass candlesticks out, and be sure stick the socket full of laurel—run—[*Turns to Young Fashion*] My lord, I ask your lordship's pardon.—

[*To the Servant*] And, do you hear, run away to nurse, bid her let miss Hoyden loose again. [*Exit Servant*] I hope your honour will excuse the disorder of my family.—We are not used to receive men of your lordship's

great quality every day. Pray where are your coaches and servants, my lord?

Young F. Sir, that I might give you and your daughter a proof how impatient I am to be nearer akin to you, I left my equipage to follow me, and came away post with only one servant.

Sir T. Your lordship does me too much honour—it was exposing your person to too much fatigue and danger, I protest it was; but my daughter shall endeavour to make you what amends she can; and though I say it, that should not say it, Hoyden has charms.

Young F. Sir, I am not a stranger to them, though I am to her: common fame has done her justice.

Sir T. My lord, I am common fame's very grateful, humble servant. My lord, my girl's young—Hoyden is young, my lord: but this I must say for her, what she wants in art, she has in breeding; and what's wanting in her age, is made good in her constitution—So pray, my lord, walk in; pray, my lord, walk in.

Young F. Sir, I wait upon you. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

An Apartment in SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY'S House.

Miss HOYDEN discovered.

Miss H. Sure nobody was ever used as I am. I know well enough what other girls do, for all they think to make a fool o'me. It's well I have a husband a coming, or i'ood I'd marry the baker, I would so.—Nobody can knock at the gate, but presently I must be looked up; and here's the young greyhound can run loose about the house all the day long, so she can—
'Tis very well—

Nurse. [Without, opening the Door] Miss Hoyden, miss, miss, miss! Miss Hoyden!

Enter Nurse.

Miss H. Well, what do you make such a noise for, ha?—What do you din a body's ears for? Can't one be at quiet for you?

Nurse. What do I din your ears for? Here's one come will din your ears for you.

Miss H. What care I who's come? I care not a fig who comes, or who goes, as long as I must be lock'd up like the ale-cellar.

Nurse. That, miss, is for fear you should be drank before you are ripe.

Miss H. Oh, don't trouble your head about that; I'm as ripe as you, though not so mellow.

Nurse. Very well. Now I have a good mind to lock you up again, and not let you see my lord to-night.

Miss H. My lord! Why, is my husband come?

Nurse. Yes, marry, is he; and a goodly person too.

Miss H. [*Hugs Nurse*] Oh, my dear nurse, forgive me this once, and I'll never misuse you again; no, if I do, you shall give me three thumps on the back, and a great pinch by the cheek.

Nurse. Ah, the poor thing! see now it melts; it's as full of good nature as an egg's full of meat.

Miss H. But, my dear nurse, don't lie now—is he come, by your troth?

Nurse. Yes, by my truly, is he.

Miss H. O Lord! I'll go and put on my laced tucker, though I'm lock'd up for a month for't. [*Exit.*]

ACT THE FOURTH.



SCENE I.

An Apartment at SIR TUNBELLY-CLUMSY'S.

Enter MISS HOYDEN and Nurse.

Nurse. Well, miss, how do you like your husband that is to be?

Miss H. O Lord, nurse, I'm so overjoyed I can scarce contain myself.

Nurse. Oh, but you must have a care of being too fond; for men, now-a-days, hate a woman that loves 'em.

Miss H. Love him! why, do you think I love him, nurse? 'Ecod, I would not care if he was hang'd, so I were but once married to him. No, that which pleases me is to think what work I'll make when I get to London; for when I am a wife and a lady both, 'ecod, I'll flaunt it with the best of 'em. Ay, and I shall have money enough to do so too, nurse.

Nurse. Ah, there's no knowing that, miss; for though these lords have a power of wealth indeed—yet, as I

have heard say, they give it all to their sluts and their trulls, who joggle it about in their coaches, with a murrain to 'em, whilst poor madam sits sighing and wishing, and has not a spare half-crown to buy her a Practice of Piety.

Miss H. Oh, but for that, don't deceive yourself, nurse; for this I must say of my lord, he's as free as an open house at Christmas; for this very morning he told me I should have six hundred a year to buy pins. Now if he gives me six hundred a year to buy pins, what do you think he'll give me to buy petticoats?

Nurse. Ah, my dearest, he deceives thee foully, and he's no better than a rogue for his pains. These Londoners have got a gibberish with 'em would confound a gipsy. That which they call pin-money, is to buy every thing in the versal world, down to their very shoe-knots. Nay, I have heard some folks say that some ladies, if they'll have gallants as they call 'em, are forced to find them out of their pin-money too.—But look, look, if his honour be not coming to you!—Now, if I were sure you would behave yourself handsomely, and not disgrace me that have brought you up, I'd leave you alone together.

Miss H. That's my best nurse, do as you'd be done by. Trust us together this once, and if I don't show my breeding, I wish I may never be married, but die an old maid.

Nurse. Well, this once I'll venture you. But if you disparage me——

Miss H. Never fear.

[Exit.

Enter Young FASHION.

Young F. Your servant, madam, I'm glad to find you alone, for I have something of importance to speak to you about.

Miss H. Sir (my lord I meant), you may speak to me about what you please, I shall give you a civil answer.

Young F. You give so obliging one, it encourages me to tell you in a few words what I think, both for

your interest and mine. Your father, I suppose you know, has resolved to make me happy in being your husband; and I hope I may obtain your consent to perform what he desires.

Miss H. Sir, I never disobey my father in any thing but eating green gooseberries.

Young F. So good a daughter must needs be an admirable wife. I am therefore impatient till you are mine, and hope you will so far consider the violence of my love, that you won't have the cruelty to defer my happiness so long as your father designs it.

Miss H. Pray, my lord, how long is that?

Young F. Madam, a thousand years—a whole week.

Miss H. Why I thought it was to be to-morrow morning, as soon as I was up. I'm sure nurse told me so.

Young F. And it shall be to-morrow morning, if you'll consent.

Miss H. If I'll consent? Why I thought I was to obey you as my husband?

Young F. That's when we are married. Till then, I'm to obey you.

Miss H. Why then, if we are to take it by turns, it's the same thing. I'll obey you now, and when we are married, you shall obey me.

Young F. With all my heart. But I doubt we must get nurse on our side, or we shall hardly prevail with the chaplain.

Miss H. No more we shan't, indeed; for he loves her better than he loves his pulpit, and would always be a preaching to her by his good will.

Young F. Why then, my dear, if you'll call her hither, we'll persuade her presently.

Miss H. O lud, I'll tell you a way how to persuade her to any thing.

Young F. How's that?

Miss H. Why tell her she's a handsome, comely woman, and give her half-a-crown.

Young F. Nay, if that will do, she shall have half a score of them.

Miss H. O gemini! for half that she'd marry you herself.—I'll run and call her. [Exit.]

Young F. Soh! matters go on swimmingly. This is a rare girl, i'faith. I shall have a fine time on't with her at London.

Enter LORY.

So, Lory, what's the matter?

Lory. Here, sir—an intercepted packet from the enemy; your brother's postillion brought it. I knew the livery, pretended to be a servant of sir Tunbelly's, and so got possession of the letter.

Young F. [*Looks at the Letter*] Ouns! he tells sir Tunbelly here that he will be with him this evening, with a large party to supper.—'Egad, I must marry the girl directly.

Lory. Oh, zounds, sir, directly to be sure. Here she comes. [Exit.]

Young F. And the old Jesabel with her.

Re-enter Miss HOYDEN and Nurse.

How do you do, good Mrs. Nurse? I desired your young lady would give me leave to see you, that I might thank you for your extraordinary care and kind conduct in her education: pray accept of this small acknowledgment for it at present, and depend upon my further kindness when I shall be that happy thing, her husband. [Gives her Money.]

Nurse. Gold, by the maakins! [*Aside*] Your honour's goodness is too great. Alas! all I can boast of is, I gave her pure good milk, and so your honour would have said, an you had seen how the poor thing thrived—and how it would look up in my face—and crow and laugh, it would.

Miss H. [*To Nurse, taking her engrity aside*] Pray one word with you. Pr'ythee, nurse, don't stand ripping up old stories, to make one ashamed before one's love. Do you think such a fine proper gentleman as he is, cares for a fiddle-come tale of a child? If you have a mind to make him have a good opinion of a woman, don't tell him what one did then, tell him what

one can do now.—I hope your honour will excuse my mis-manners to whisper before you ; it was only to give some orders about the family.

Young F. Oh, every thing, madam, is to give way to business ; besides, good housewifery is a very commendable quality in a young lady.

Miss H. Pray, sir, are young ladies good housewives at London-town ? Do they darn their own linen ?

Young F. Oh, no, they study how to spend money, not to save.

Miss H. 'Ecod, I don't know but that may be better sport, ha, nurse ?

Young F. Well, you shall have your choice when you come there.

Miss H. Shall I ?—then, by my troth, I'll get there as fast as I can.—His honour desires you'll be so kind as to let us be married to-morrow. [To Nurse.

Nurse. To-morrow, my dear madam ?

Young F. Ay, faith, nurse, you may well be surprised at miss's wanting to put it off so long. To-morrow ! no, no ; 'tis now, this very hour, I would have the ceremony performed.

Miss H. 'Ecod, with all my heart.

Nurse. Oh, mercy ! worse and worse !

Young F. Yes, sweet nurse, now and privately ; for all things being signed and sealed, why should sir Tunbelly make us stay a week for a wedding-dinner ?

Nurse. But if you should be married now, what will you do when sir Tunbelly calls for you to be married ?

Miss H. Why then we will be married again.

Nurse. What twice, my child ?

Miss H. 'Ecod, I don't care how often I'm married, not I.

Nurse. Well, I'm such a tender-hearted fool, I find I can refuse you nothing. So you shall e'en follow your own inventions.

Miss H. Shall I ?—O Lord, I could leap over the moon.

Young F. Dear nurse, this goodness of yours shall be still more rewarded. But now you must employ

your power with the chaplain, that he may do his friendly office too, and then we shall be all happy. Do you think you can prevail with him?

Nurse. Prevail with him; or he shall never prevail with me, I can tell him that.

Young F. I'm glad to hear it; however, to strengthen your interest with him, you may let him know I have several fat livings in my gift, and that the first that falls shall be in your disposal.

Nurse. Nay, then I'll make him marry more folks than one, I'll promise him.

Miss H. Faith, do, nurse, make him marry you too; I'm sure he'll do't for a fat living.

Young F. Well, nurse, while you go and settle matters with him, your lady and I will go and take a walk in the garden. [Exit Nurse] Come, madam, dare you venture yourself alone with me?

[Takes Miss Hoyden by the Hand.]

Miss H. Oh dear yes, sir; I don't think you'll do any thing to me I need be afraid on. [Exit.]

SCENE II. AMANDA'S Dressing-room.

Enter AMANDA, followed by her Maid.

Maid. If you please, madam, only to say whether you'll have me buy them or not?

Aman. Yes—no—Go, teaser; I care not what you do. Pr'ythee leave me. [Exit Maid.]

Enter BERINTHIA.

Ber. What, in the name of Jove, is the matter with you?

Aman. The matter, Berinthia? I'm almost mad; I'm plagu'd to death.

Ber. Who is it that plagues you?

Aman. Who do you think should plague a wife, but her husband?

Ber. O, ho! is it come to that?—We shall have you wish yourself a widow, by-and-by.

Aman. Would I were any thing but what I am! A base, ungrateful man, to use me thus!

Ber. What, has he given you fresh reason to suspect his wandering?

Aman. Every hour gives me reason.

Ber. And yet, Amanda, you perhaps at this moment cause in another's breast the same tormenting doubts and jealousies which you feel so sensibly yourself.

Aman. Heaven knows I would not.

Ber. Why, you can't tell but there may be some one as tenderly attach'd to Townly, whom you boast of as your conquest, as you can be to your husband.

Aman. I'm sure I never encouraged his pretensions.

Ber. Pshaw! pshaw! No sensible man ever perseveres to love without encouragement. Why have you not treated him as you have lord Foppington?

Aman. Because he presum'd not so far. But let us drop the subject. Men, not women, are riddles. Mr. Loveless now follows some flirt for variety, whom I'm sure he does not like so well as he does me.

Ber. That's more than you know, madam.

Aman. Why, do you know the ugly thing?

Ber. I think I can guess at the person; but she's no such ugly thing neither.

Aman. Is she very handsome?

Ber. Truly I think so.

Aman. What'er she be, I'm sure he does not like her well enough to bestow any thing more than a little outward gallantry upon her.

Ber. Outward gallantry! I can't bear this. [*Aside*] Come, come, don't you be too secure, Amanda; while you suffer Townly to imagine that you do not detest him for his designs on you, you have no right to complain that your husband is engaged elsewhere. But here comes the person we were speaking of.

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

Col. T. Ladies, as I come uninvited, I beg, if I intrude, you will use the same freedom in turning me out again.

Aman. I believe it is near the time Loveless said he would be at home. He talked of accepting of lord Foppington's invitation to sup at sir Tunbelly Clumsy's.

Col. T. His lordship has done me the honour to invite me also. If you'll let me escort you, I'll let you into a mystery as we go, in which you must play a part when we arrive.

Aman. But we have two hours yet to spare; the carriages are not ordered till eight, and it is not a five minute's drive. So, cousin, let us keep the colonel to play at piquet with us, till Mr. Loveless comes home.

Ber. As you please, madam; but you know I have a letter to write.

Col. T. Madam, you know you may command me, though I am a very wretched gamester.

Aman. Oh, you play well enough to lose your money, and that's all the ladies require; and so, without any more ceremony, let us go into the next room, and call for cards and candles. [Exit.

SCENE III. BERINTHIA'S Dressing-room.

Enter LOVELESS.

Love. So—thus far all's well—I have got into her dressing-room, and it being dusk, I think nobody has perceived me steal into the house. I heard Berinthia tell my wife she had some particular letters to write this evening, before she went to sir Tunbelly's, and here are the implements of correspondence.—How shall I muster up assurance to show myself when she comes?—I think she has given me encouragement; and to do my impudence justice, I have made the most of it.—I hear a door open, and some one coming. If it should be my wife, what the devil should I say?—I believe she mistrusts me, and by my life, I don't deserve her tenderness; however, I am determined to reform, though not yet. Ha! Berinthia! So I'll step in here, till I see what sort of humour she is in.

[Goes into the Closet.

Enter BERINTHIA.

Ber. Was ever so provoking a situation! To think I should sit and hear him compliment Amanda to my face! I have lost all patience with them both. I would not for something have Loveless know what temper of mind they have piqued me into; yet I can't bear to leave them together. No—I'll put my papers away, and return to disappoint them. [*Goes to the Closet*] O Lord! a ghost! a ghost! a ghost!

Re-enter LOVELESS.

Love. Peace, my angel, it's no ghost, but one worth a hundred spirits.

Ber. How, sir, have you had the insolence to presume to——run in again——here's somebody coming.
[*Loveless goes into the Closet.*]

Enter Maid.

Maid. O Lord, ma'am, what's the matter?

Ber. O heavens! I'm almost frightened out of my wits! I thought verily I had seen a ghost, and 'twas nothing but a black hood, pinn'd against the wall.—You may go again—I am the fearfulest fool.

[*Exit Maid.*]

Re-enter LOVELESS.

Love. Is the coast clear?

Ber. The coast clear? Upon my word, I wonder at your assurance!

Love. Why then you wonder before I have given you a proof of it. But where's my wife?

Ber. At cards.

Love. With whom?

Ber. With Townly.

Love. Then we are safe enough.

Ber. You are so? Some husbands would be of another mind, were he at cards with their wives.

Love. And they'd be in the right on't too; but I dare trust mine.

Ber. Indeed! and she, I doubt not, has the same

confidence in you. Yet do you think she'd be content to come and find you here?

Love. 'Egad, as you say, that's true—then, for fear she should come, hadn't we better go into the next room, out of her way?

Ber. What, in the dark?

Love. Ay, or with a light, which you please.

Ber. You are certainly very impudent.

Love. Nay then—let me conduct you, my angel.

Ber. Hold, hold, you are mistaken in your angel, I assure you.

Love. I hope not; for by this hand I swear.

Ber. Come, come, let go my hand, or I shall hate you—I'll cry out, as I live.

Love. Impossible! you cannot be so cruel.

Ber. Ha! here's some one coming. Be gone instantly.

Love. Will you promise to return, if I remain here?

Ber. Never trust myself in a room again with you while I live.

Love. But I have something particular to communicate to you.

Ber. Well, well, before we go to sir Tunbelly's, I'll walk upon the lawn. If you are fond of a moonlight evening, you'll find me there.

Love. I'faith, they're coming here now. I take you at your word. *[Exit Loveless into the Closet.]*

Ber. 'Tis Amanda, as I live. I hope she has not heard his voice; though I mean she should have her share of jealousy in her turn.

Enter AMANDA.

Aman. Berinthia, why did you leave me?

Ber. I thought I only spoil'd your party.

Aman. Since you have been gone, Townly has attempted to renew his importunities. I must break with him—for I cannot venture to acquaint Mr. Loveless with his conduct.

Ber. Oh, no! Mr. Loveless mustn't know of it by any means.

Aman. Oh, not for the world—I wish, *Berinthia*, you would undertake to speak to *Townly* on the subject.

Ber. Upon my word—it would be a very pleasant subject for me to talk upon. But come, let us go back; and you may depend on't I'll not leave you together again, if I can help it. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter LOVELESS.

Love. Soh—so! a pretty piece of business I have overheard! *Townly* makes love to my wife, and I am not to know it for all the world. I must inquire into this—and, by heav'n, if I find that *Amanda* has, in the smallest degree—Yet what have I been at here!—O, 'adeath! that's no rule.

That wife alone unsullied credit wins,
Whose virtues can atone her husband's sins.
Thus, while the man has other nymphs in view,
It suits the woman to be doubly true. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.



SCENE I. A Garden. Moonlight.

Enter LOVELESS.

Love. Now, does she mean to make a fool of me, or not? I shan't wait much longer, for my wife will soon be inquiring for me to set out on our supping-party. Suspense is at all times the devil—but of all modes of suspense, the watching for a loitering mistress is the worst.—But let me accuse her no longer; she approaches with one smile, to o'erpay the anxieties of a year.

Enter BERINTHIA.

O, Berinthia, what a world of kindness are you in my debt! had you staid five minutes longer——

Ber. You would have gone, I suppose?

Love. 'Egad, she's right enough.

[*Aside.*

Ber. And I assure you 'twas ten to one that I came at all. In short, I begin to think you are too dangerous a being to trifle with; and as I shall probably only make a fool of you at last, I believe we had better let matters rest as they are.

Love. You cannot mean it, sure?

Ber. What more would you have me give to a married man?

Love. How doubly cruel to remind me of my misfortunes!

Ber. A misfortune to be married to so charming a woman as Amanda?

Love. I grant all her merit, but——'Sdeath! now see what you have done by talking of her—she's here, by all that's unlucky, and 'Townly with her—I'll observe them.

Ber. O God, we had better get out of the way; for I should feel as awkward to meet her as you.

Love. Ay, if I mistake not, I see Townly coming this way also. I must see a little into this matter.

[*Steps aside.*]

Ber. Oh, if that's your intention, I am no woman, if I suffer myself to be outdone in curiosity.

[*Goes on the other Side.*]

Enter AMANDA.

Aman. Mr. Loveless come home, and walking on the lawn! I will not suffer him to walk so late, though perhaps it is to show his neglect of me. Mr. Loveless, I must speak with you. Ha! Townly again! How I am persecuted!

Enter COLONEL TOWNLY.

Col. T. Madam, you seem disturbed.

Aman. Sir, I have reason.

Col. T. Whatever be the cause, I would to heaven it were in my power to bear the pain, or to remove the malady.

Aman. Your interference can only add to my distress.

Col. T. Ah, madam, if it be the sting of unrequited love you suffer from, seek for your remedy in revenge: weigh well the strength and beauty of your charms, and rouse up that spirit a woman ought to bear. Disdain the false embraces of a husband. See at your feet

a real lover; his zeal may give him title to your pity, although his merit cannot claim your love.

Love. So, so, very fine, i'faith. [*Aside.*

Aman. Why do you presume to talk to me thus?—Is this your friendship to Mr. Loveless? I perceive you will compel me at last to acquaint him with your treachery.

Col. T. He could not upbraid me if you were—he deserves it from me; for he has not been more false to you, than faithless to me.

Aman. To you?

Col. T. Yes, madam; the lady for whom he now deserts those charms which he was never worthy of, was mine by right; and I imagined too, by inclination.—Yes, madam Berinthia, who now——

Aman. Berinthia! Impossible!

Col. T. 'Tis true, or may I never merit your attention. She is the deceitful sorceress who now holds your husband's heart in bondage.

Aman. I will not believe it.

Col. T. By the faith of a true lover, I speak from conviction. This very day I saw them together, and overheard——

Aman. Peace, sir, I will not even listen to such slander—this is a poor device to work on my resentment, to listen to your insidious addresses. No, sir, though Mr. Loveless may be capable of error, I am convinced I cannot be deceived so grossly in him, as to believe what you now report; and for Berinthia, you should have fixed on some more probable person for my rival, than she who is my relation and my friend: for while I am myself free from guilt, I will never believe that love can beget injury, or confidence create ingratitude.

Col. T. If I do not prove to you——

Aman. You never shall have an opportunity. From the artful manner in which you first showed yourself to me, I might have been led, as far as virtue permitted, to have thought you less criminal than unhappy; but

this last unmanly artifice merits at once my resentment and contempt. [Exit.

Col. T. Sure there's divinity about her; and she has dispensed some portion of honour's light to me: yet can I bear to lose Berinthia without revenge or compensation? Perhaps she is not so culpable as I thought her. I was mistaken when I began to think lightly of Amanda's virtue, and may be in my censure of my Berinthia. Surely I love her still, for I feel I should be happy to find myself in the wrong. [Exit.

Re-enter LOVELESS and BERINTHIA.

Ber. Your servant, Mr. Loveless.

Love. Your servant, madam.

Ber. Pray what do you think of this?

Love. Truly, I don't know what to say.

Ber. Don't you think we steal forth two contemptible creatures?

Love. Why tolerably so, I must confess.

Ber. And do you conceive it possible for you ever to give Amanda the least uneasiness again?

Love. No, I think we never should, indeed.

Ber. We!—why, monster, you don't pretend that I ever entertain'd a thought?

Love. Why then, sincerely and honestly, Berinthia, there is something in my wife's conduct which strikes me so forcibly, that if it were not for shame, and the fear of hurting you in her opinion, I swear I would follow her, confess my error, and trust to her generosity for forgiveness—

Ber. Nay, pr'ythee, don't let your respect for me prevent you; for as my object in trifling with you was nothing more than to pique Townly, and as I perceive he has been actuated by a similar motive, you may depend on't I shall make no mystery of the matter to him.

Love. By no means inform him; for though I may choose to pass by his conduct without resentment, how will he presume to look me in the face again?

Ber. How will you presume to look him in the face again?

Love. He who has dared to attempt the honour of my wife!

Ber. You, who have dared to attempt the honour of his mistress! Come, come, be ruled by me, who affect more levity than I have, and don't think of anger in this cause. A readiness to resent injuries, is a virtue only in those who are slow to injure.

Love. Then I will be ruled by you; and when you shall think proper to undeceive Townly, may your good qualities make as sincere a convert of him, as Amanda's have of me.—When truth's extorted from us, then we own the robe of virtue is a sacred habit.

Could women but our secret counsels scan—

Could they but reach the deep reserve of man—

To keep our love they'd rate their virtue high,

They live together, and together die. [Exeunt.

SCENE II. SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY'S House.

Enter MISS HOYDEN, Nurse, and Young FASHION.

Young F. This quick dispatch of the chaplain's I take so kindly, it shall give him claim to my favour as long as I live, I assure you.

Miss H. And to mine, too, I promise you.

Nurse. I most humbly thank your honours; and may your children swarm about you like bees about a honeycomb.

Miss H. I'ood, with all my heart—the more the merrier, I say—ha, nurse?

Enter LORY.

Lory. One word with you, for heaven's sake.

[Taking Young Fashion hastily aside.

Young F. What the devil's the matter?

Lory. Sir, your fortune's ruin'd if you are not married. Yonder's your brother arrived, with two coaches and six horses, twenty footmen, and a coat worth four-

score pounds—so judge what will become of your lady's heart.

Young F. Is he in the house yet?

Lory. No, they are capitulating with him at the gate. Sir Tunbelly luckily takes him for an impostor; and I have told him that we had heard of this plot before.

Young F. That's right.—[Turning to *Miss Hoyden*] My dear, here's a troublesome business my man tells me of, but don't be frighten'd, we shall be too hard for the rogue.—Here's an impudent fellow at the gate (not knowing I was come hither incognito) has taken my name upon him, in hopes to run away with you.

Miss H. Oh, the brazen-faced varlet; it's well we are married, or may be we might never have been so.

Young F. 'Egad, like enough. [*Aside*—Pr'ythee, nurse, run to sir Tunbelly, and stop him from going to the gate before I speak with him.

Nurse. An't please your honour, my lady and I had best lock ourselves up till the danger be over.

Young F. Do so, if you please.

Miss H. Not so fast; I won't be lock'd up any more, now I'm married.

Young F. Yes, pray, my dear, do, till we have seiz'd this rascal.

Miss H. Nay, if you'll pray me, I'll do any thing.

[*Exit Miss Hoyden and Nurse.*]

Young F. [*To Lory*] Hark you, sirrah, things are better than you imagine. The wedding's over.

Lory. The devil it is, sir!

Young F. Not a word—all's safe—but sir Tunbelly don't know it, nor must not yet. So I am resolved to brazen the brunt of the business out, and have the pleasure of turning the impostor upon his lordship, which I believe may easily be done.

Enter SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY.

Did you ever hear, sir, of so impudent an undertaking?

Sir T. Never, by the mass; but we'll tickle him, I'll warrant you.

Young F. They tell me, sir, he has a great many people with him, disguised like servants.

Sir T. Ay, ay, rogues enow, but we have master'd them. We only fired a few shot over their heads, and the regiment scower'd in an instant. Here, 'Tummas, bring in your prisoner.

Young F. If you please, sir Tunbelly, it will be best for me not to confront the fellow yet, till you have heard how far his impudence will carry him.

Sir T. 'Egad, your lordship is an ingenious person. Your lordship then will please to step aside.

Lory. 'Fore heaven, I applaud my master's modesty.
[Exit with *Young Fashion*.]

Enter Servants, with LORD FOPPINGTON disarmed.

Sir T. Come, bring him along, bring him along.

Lord F. What the plague do you mean, gentlemen? is it fair time, that you are all drunk before supper?

Sir T. Drunk, sirrah! here's an impudent rogue for you now. Drunk or sober, bully, I'm a justice o'the peace, and know how to deal with strollers.

Lord F. Strollers!

Sir T. Ay, strollers. Come, give an account of yourself. What's your name? where do you live? do you pay scot and lot? Come, are you a freeholder or a copyholder?

Lord F. And why dost thou ask me so many impertinent questions?

Sir T. Because I'll make you answer 'em, before I have done with you, you rascal you.

Lord F. Before Gad, all the answers I can make to 'em is, that you are a very extraordinary old fellow, stap my vitals!

Sir T. Nay, if thou art joking deputy lieutenants, we know how to deal with you. Here, draw a warrant for him immediately.

Lord F. A warrant! What the devil is't thou wouldst be at, old gentleman?

Sir T. I would be at you, sirrah (if my hands were

not tied as a magistrate), and with these two double fists beat your teeth down your throat, you dog you.

Lord F. And why wouldst thou spoil my face at that rate?

Sir T. For your design to rob me of my daughter, villain.

Lord F. Rab thee of thy daughter! Now do I begin to believe I am in bed and asleep, and that all this is but a dream. Pr'ythee, old father, wilt thou give me leave to ask thee one question?

Sir T. I can't tell whether I will or not, till I know what it is.

Lord F. Why then, it is, whether thou didst not write to my lord Foppington, to come down and marry thy daughter?

Sir T. Yes, marry, did I, and my lord Foppington is come down, and shall marry my daughter before she's a day older.

Lord F. Now give me thy hand, old dad; I thought we should understand one another at last.

Sir T. The fellow's mad—here, bind him hand and foot. *[They bind him.]*

Lord F. Nay, pr'ythee, knight, leave fooling; thy jest begins to grow dull.

Sir T. Bind him, I say—he's mad: bread and water, a dark room, and a whip, may bring him to his senses again.

Lord F. Pr'ythee, sir Tunbely, why should you take such an aversion to the freedom of my address, as to suffer the rascals thus to skewer down my arms like a rabbit? 'Egad, if I don't awake, by all that I can see, this is like to prove one of the most impertinent dreams that ever I dreamt in my life. *[Aside.]*

Re-enter Miss HOYDEN and Nurse.

Miss H. *[Going up to him]* Is this he that would have run—Fough, how he stinks of sweets!—Pray, father, let him be dragged through the horse-pond.

Lord F. This must be my wife, by her natural inclination to her husband. *[Aside.]*

Miss H. Pray, father, what do you intend to do with him——hang him?

Sir T. That at least, child.

Nurse. Ay, and it's e'en too good for him too.

Lord F. Madame la gouvernante, I presume; hitherto this appears to me to be one of the most extraordinary families that ever man of quality march'd into. [*Aside.*]

Sir T. What's become of my lord, daughter?

Miss H. He's just coming, sir.

Lord F. My lord, what does he mean by that, now? [*Aside.*]

Re-enter Young FASHION and LORY.

Stap my vitals, Tam, now the dream's out.

Young F. Is this the fellow, sir, that design'd to trick me of your daughter?

Sir T. This is he, my lord; how do you like him? Is not he a pretty fellow to get a fortune?

Young F. I find by his dress, he thought your daughter might be taken with a beau.

Miss H. Oh, gemini! Is this a beau? Let me see him again. Ha! I find a beau is no such ugly thing, neither.

Young F. 'Egad, she'll be in love with him presently—I'll e'en have him sent away to jail. [*Aside*]——Sir, though your undertaking shows you a person of no extraordinary modesty, I suppose you han't confidence enough to expect much favour from me?

[*To Lord Foppington.*]

Lord F. Strike me dumb, Tam, thou art a very impudent fellow.

Nurse. Look, if the varlet has not the effrontery to call his lordship, plain Thomas.

Lord F. My lord Foppington, shall I beg one word with your lordship?

Nurse. Ho, ho, it's my lord with him now. See how afflictions will humble folks.

Miss H. Pray, my lord, don't let him whisper too close, lest he bite your ear off.

Lord F. I am not altogether so hungry as your lady-

ship is pleased to imagine.—Look you, Tam, I am sensible I have not been so kind to you as I ought, but I hope you'll forgive what's past, and accept of the five thousand pounds I offer—thou mayst live in extreme splendour with it, stay my vitals!

[*Apart to Young Fashion.*

Young F. It's a much easier matter to prevent a disease than to cure it. A quarter of that sum would have secured your mistress, twice as much cannot redeem her.

[*Apart. Leaving him.*

Sir T. Well, what says he?

Young F. Only the rascal offered me a bribe to let him go.

Sir T. Ay, he shall go, with a plague to him—lead on, constable.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here is muster Loveless, and muster colonel Townly, and some ladies, to wait on you. [*To Young F.*

Lory. So, sir, what will you do now? [*Aside.*

Young F. Be quiet; they are in the plot. [*Aside to Lory*]—Only a few friends, sir Tunbelly, whom I wish'd to introduce to you.

Lord F. Thou art the most impudent fellow, Tam, that ever nature yet brought into the world. Sir Tunbelly, strike me speechless, but these are my friends and acquaintance, and my guests, and they will soon inform thee whether I am the true lord Foppington or not.

Enter LOVELESS, COLONEL TOWNLY, AMANDA, and BERINTHIA.

Young F. So, gentlemen, this is friendly; I rejoice to see you.

Col. T. My lord, we are fortunate to be the witnesses of your lordship's happiness.

Love. But your lordship will do us the honour to introduce us to sir Tunbelly Clumsy?

Aman. And us to your lady.

Lord F. Ged take me, but they are all in a story.

Sir T. Gentlemen, you do me much honour; my lord Foppington's friends will ever be welcome to me and mine.

Young F. My love, let me introduce you to these ladies.

Miss H. By goles, they look so fine and so stiff, I am almost ashamed to come nigh 'em.

Aman. A most engaging lady, indeed!

Miss H. Thank ye, ma'am.

Ber. And I doubt not will soon distinguish herself in the beau monde.

Miss H. Where is that?

Young F. You'll soon learn, my dear.

Love. But, lord Foppington——

Lord F. Sir!

Love. Sir! I was not addressing myself to you, sir! —Pray who is this gentleman? He seems rather in a singular predicament——

Col. T. For so well-dress'd a person, a little oddly circumstanced, indeed.

Sir T. Ha, ha, ha!—So, these are your friends and your guests, ha, my adventurer?

Lord F. I am struck dumb with their impudence, and cannot positively say whether I shall ever speak again or not.

Sir T. Why, sir, this modest gentleman wanted to pass himself upon me as lord Foppington, and carry off my daughter.

Love. A likely plot to succeed, truly, ha, ha!

Lord F. As Gad shall judge me, Loveless, I did not expect this from thee. Come, pr'ythee confess the joke; tell sir Tunbelly that I am the real lord Foppington, who yesterday made love to thy wife; was honoured by her with a slap on the face, and afterwards pink'd through the body by thee.

Sir T. A likely story, truly, that a peer would behave thus!

Love. A pretty fellow, indeed, that would scandalize the character he wants to assume; but what will you do with him, sir Tunbelly?

Sir T. Commit him, certainly, unless the bride and bridegroom choose to pardon him.

Lord F. Bride and bridegroom! For Gad's sake, sir Tunbelly, 'tis torture to me to hear you call 'em so.

Miss H. Why, you ugly thing, what would you have him call us dog and cat?

Lord F. By no means, miss; for that sounds ten times more like man and wife than t'other.

Sir T. A precious rogue this to come a wooing!

Re-enter a Servant.

Serv. There are some gentlefolks below to wait upon lord Foppington.

Col. T. 'Sdeath, Tom, what will you do now?

[Apart to Young Fashion.]

Lord F. Now, sir Tunbelly, here are witnesses, who I believe are not corrupted.

Sir T. Peace, fellow! Would your lordship choose to have your guests shown here, or shall they wait till we come to 'em?

Young F. I believe, sir Tunbelly, we had better not have these visitors here yet.—'Egad, all must out. *[Aside.]*

Love. Confess, confess, we'll stand by you.

[Apart to Young Fashion.]

Lord F. Nay, sir Tunbelly, I insist on your calling evidence on both sides—and if I do not prove that fellow an impostor——

Young F. Brother, I will save you the trouble, by now confessing that I am not what I have passed myself for. Sir Tunbelly, I am a gentleman, and I flatter myself a man of character; but 'tis with great pride I assure you I am not lord Foppington.

Sir T. Ouns!—what's this?—an impostor?—a cheat?—fire and faggots, sir, if you are not lord Foppington, who the devil are you?

Young F. Sir, the best of my condition is, I am your son-in-law; and the worst of it is, I am brother to that noble peer.

Lord F. Impudent to the last, Gad dem me.

Sir T. My son-in-law! Not yet I hope.

Young F. Pardon me, sir; thanks to the goodness of your chaplain, and the kind offices of this old gentlewoman.

Lory. 'Tis true, indeed, sir; I gave your daughter away, and Mrs. Nurse, here, was clerk.

Sir T. Knock that rascal down!—But speak, Jesabel, how's this?

Nurse. Alas! your honour, forgive me! I have been overreach'd in this business as well as you. Your worship knows, if the wedding-dinner had been ready, you would have given her away with your own hands.

Sir T. But how darst you do this, without acquainting me?

Nurse. Alas, if your worship had seen how the poor thing begg'd and pray'd, and clung and twin'd about me like ivy round an old wall, you would say, I, who had nurs'd it, and rear'd it, must have had a heart like stone to refuse it.

Sir T. Ouns! I shall go mad! Unloose my lord there, you scoundrels.

Lord F. Why, when these gentlemen are at leisure, I should be glad to congratulate you on your son-in-law, with a little more freedom of address.

Miss H. 'Egad, though, I don't see which is to be my husband after all.

Love. Come, come, sir Tunbelly, a man of your understanding must perceive, that an affair of this kind is not to be mended by anger and reproaches.

Col. T. Take my word for it, sir Tunbelly, you are only tricked into a son-in-law you may be proud of; my friend, Tom Fashion, is as honest a fellow as ever breath'd.

Love. That he is, depend on't; and will hunt or drink with you most affectionately; be generous, old boy, and forgive them——

Sir T. Never. The hussy!—when I had set my heart on getting her a title.

Lord F. Now, sir Tunbelly, that I am untruss'd—give me leave to thank thee for the very extraordinary reception I have met with in thy damn'd, execrable

mansion; and at the same time to assure you, that of all the bumpkins and blockheads I have had the misfortune to meet with, thou art the most obstinate and egregious, strike me ugly!

Sir T. What's this? I believe you are both rogues alike.

Lord F. No, sir Tunbelly, thou wilt find, to thy unspeakable mortification, that I am the real lord Poppington, who was to have disgraced myself by an alliance with a clod; and that thou hast match'd thy girl to a beggarly younger brother of mine, whose title-deeds might be contain'd in thy tobacco-box.

Sir T. Puppy! puppy!—I might prevent their being beggars, if I chose it; for I could give 'em as good a rent-roll as your lordship.

Lord F. Ay, old fellow, but you will not do that—for that would be acting like a Christian, and thou art a barbarian, stap my vitals.

Sir T. Udzookers! Now six such words more, and I'll forgive them directly.

Love. 'Slife, sir Tunbelly, you should do it, and bless yourself. Ladies, what say you?

Aman. Good sir 'Tunbelly, you must consent.

Ber. Come, you have been young yourself, sir Tunbelly.

Sir T. Well then, if I must, I must; but turn—turn that sneering lord out however, and let me be revenged on somebody. But first look whether I am a barbarian or not; there, children, I join your hands; and when I'm in a better humour, I'll give you my blessing.

Love. Nobly done, sir Tunbelly; and we shall see you dance at a grandson's christening yet.

Miss H. By goles though, I don't understand this. What, an't I to be a lady after all? only plain Mrs.—What's my husband's name, nurse?

Nurse. Squire Fashion.

Miss H. Squire, is he?—Well, that's better than nothing.

Lord F. Now I will put on a philosophic air, and show these people, that it is not possible to put a man

of my quality out of countenance. [*Aside*] Dear Tam, since things are fallen out, pr'ythee give me leave to wish thee joy; I do it de bon oeur, strike me dumb! You have married into a family of great politeness and uncommon elegance of manners, and your bride appears to be a lady beautiful in person, modest in her deportment, refined in her sentiments, and of nice morality, split my windpipe!

Miss H. By goles, husband, break his bones, if he calls me names.

Young F. Your lordship may keep up your spirits with your grimace, if you please; I shall support mine by sir Tunbelly's favour, with this lady and three thousand pounds a year.

Lord F. Well, adieu, Tam—ladies, I kiss your hands. Sir Tunbelly, I shall now quit this thy den; but while I retain the use of my arms, I shall ever remember thou art a demn'd, horrid savage; Ged demn me.

[*Exit.*]

Sir T. By the mass, 'tis well he's gone—for I should ha' been provoked, by-and-by, to ha' dun un a mischief. Well, if this is a lord, I think Hoyden has luck o'her side, in troth.

Col. T. She has indeed, sir Tunbelly—but I hear the fiddles; his lordship, I know, had provided 'em.

Love. O, a dance and a bottle, sir Tunbelly, by all means.

Sir T. I had forgot the company below; well—what—we must be merry then, ha? and dance and drink, ha? Well, fore George, you shan't say I do these things by halves. Son-in-law there looks like a hearty rogue, so we'll have a night on't: and which of these ladies will be the old man's partner, ha?—'Ecod, I don't know how I came to be in so good a humour.

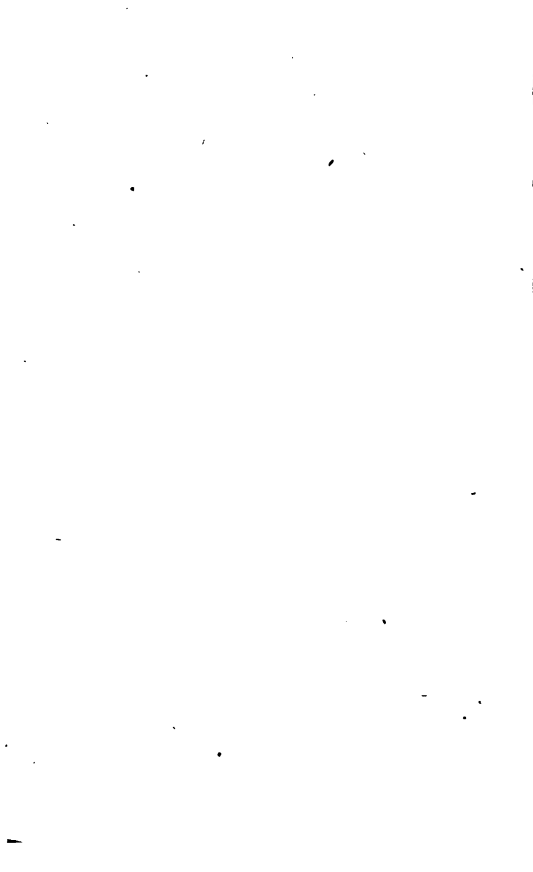
Ber. Well, sir Tunbelly, my friend and I both will endeavour to keep you so: you have done a generous action, and are entitled to our attention. If you should be at a loss to divert your new guests, we will assist you to relate to them the plot of your daughter's mar-

riage, and his lordship's deserved mortification ; a subject which perhaps may afford no bad evening's entertainment.

Sir T. 'Eood, with all my heart ; though I am a main bungler at a long story.

Ber. Never fear, we will assist you, if the tale is judged worth being repeated ; but of this you may be assured, that while the intention is evidently to please, British auditors will ever be indulgent to the errors of the performance. [*Exeunt.*





Three Weeks after Marriage.

A COMEDY.

BY ARTHUR MURPHY.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

Author of several Dramatic Pieces: and

PROMPTER OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.



Printed at the Chiswick Press,

BY C. WHITTINGHAM;

FOR WHITTINGHAM AND ARLISS, PATERNOSTER
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1815.



THREE WEEKS AFTER MARRIAGE

WAS originally produced under the title of "**WHAT WE MUST ALL COME TO,**" and completely condemned; was reproduced with its present title in the year 1776 (at Covent Garden), when its success afforded "a very striking proof of the capriciousness of public taste, and the injustice of some public determinations*."

The public of the present day are indebted to the late Mr. Lewis for its resuscitation, and the memory of his acting the part of *Sir Charles Racket*, will ever cause one of the numerous regrets, which those who have seen him will always experience, on recollecting his high professional excellence.

* *Biographia Dramatica.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted in 1776.

<i>Sir Charles Racket</i>	Mr. Lewis.
<i>Drugget</i>	Mr. Quick.
<i>Lovelace</i>	Mr. Palmer.
<i>Woodley</i>	Mr. Cubitt.
<i>Lady Racket</i>	Mrs. Abington.
<i>Mrs. Drugget</i>	Mrs. Pitt.
<i>Nancy</i>	Mrs. Morton.
<i>Dimity</i>	Mrs. Wilson.

1813.

	<i>Drury Lane.</i>	<i>Covent Garden.</i>
<i>Sir Charles Racket</i>	Mr. Elliston.	Mr. Jones.
<i>Drugget</i>	Mr. Dowton.	Mr. Blanchard.
<i>Lovelace</i>	[Omitted.]	Mr. Treby.
<i>Woodley</i>	Mr. Fisher.	Mr. Hamerton.
<i>Servant</i>	Mr. Evans.	
<i>Lady Racket</i>	Miss Smith.	Mrs. Jordan.
<i>Mrs. Drugget</i>	Mrs. Sparks.	Mrs. Davenport.
<i>Nancy</i>	Mrs. Horn.	Miss E. Bolton.
<i>Dimity</i>	Mrs. Harlow.	Mrs. Gibbs.

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I.

Enter WOODLEY and DIMITY.

Dim. Po! po!—no such thing—I tell you, Mr. Woodley, you are a mere novice in these affairs.

Wood. Nay, but listen to reason, Mrs. Dimity—has not your master, Mr. Drugget, invited me down to his country seat, in order to give me his daughter Nancy in marriage; and with what pretence can he now break off?

Dim. What pretence!—you put a body out of all patience—But go on your own way, sir; my advice is all lost upon you.

Wood. You do me injustice, Mrs. Dimity—your advice has governed my whole conduct—Have not I fixed an interest in the young lady's heart?

Dim. An interest in a fiddlestick!—you ought to have made love to the father and mother—what, do you think the way to get a wife, at this time of day, is by speaking fine things to the lady you have a

Dim. And, pray, can you do better than follow the fashion?

Nan. Ah! I know there's a fashion for new bonnets, and a fashion for dressing the hair—but I never heard of a fashion for the heart.

Dim. Why then, my dear, the heart mostly follows the fashion now.

Nan. Does it?—pray who sets the fashion of the heart?

Dim. All the fine ladies in London, o'my conscience.

Nan. And what's the last new fashion, pray?

Dim. Why, to marry any fop that has a few, deceitful, agreeable appearances about him; something of a pert phrase, a good operator for the teeth, and a tolerable tailor.

Nan. And do they marry without loving?

Dim. Oh! marrying for love has been a great while out of fashion.

Nan. Why, then I'll wait till that fashion comes up again.

Dim. And then, Mr. Lovelace, I reckon—

Nan. Pshaw! I don't like him; he talks to me as if he was the most miserable man in the world, and the confident thing looks so pleas'd with himself all the while.—I want to marry for love, and not for card-playing—I should not be able to bear the life my sister leads with sir Charles Racket—and I'll forfeit my new cap, if they don't quarrel soon.

Dim. Oh, fie! no! they won't quarrel yet awhile.—A quarrel in three weeks after marriage, would be somewhat of the quickest—By-and-by we shall hear of their whims and their humours—Well, but if you don't like Mr. Lovelace, what say you to Mr. Woodley?

Nan. I don't know what to say.

SONG.

(Introduced at Covent Garden by Miss E. Bolton.)

WRITTEN BY MR. PARRY.

I once resolv'd to laugh at love,
And all his mandates brave;
But when he came in Woodley's form,
I soon became his slave;
I tried in vain
To break the chain
With which my heart was bound;
The more I strove
To vanquish love,
The more I felt the wound.
'Twas silly quite I found to cope,
With one so skill'd in art;
For whilst I gaz'd on Woodley's eye,
Love stole away my heart;
But I'll not sigh,
No, no, not I,
If he but faithful prove;
For nought to me,
Can ever be,
So sweet as mutual love.

Re-enter WOODLEY.

Wood. My sweetest angel! I have heard all, and my heart overflows with love and gratitude.

Nan. Ah! but I did not know you was listening. You should not have betray'd me so, Dimity; I shall be angry with you.

Dim. Well, I'll take my chance for that.—Run both into my room, and say all your pretty things to one another there, for here comes the old gentleman—make haste away.
[Exeunt Woodley and Nancy.]

Enter DRUGGET.

Drug. A forward presuming coxcomb!—Dimity, do you step to Mrs. Drugget, and send her hither.

Dim. Yes, sir——It works upon him, I see.

[*Aside, and exit.*]

Drug. The yew-trees ought not to be cut, because they'll help to keep off the dust, and I am too near the road already—a sorry, ignorant fop!—When I am in so fine a situation, and can see every carriage that goes by.—And then to abuse the nurseryman's rarities!—A finer sucking pig in lavender, with sage growing in his belly, was never seen!—And yet he wants me not to have it—But have it I will.—There's a fine tree of knowledge too, with Adam and Eve in juniper; Eve's nose not quite grown, but it's thought in the spring it will be very forward—I'll have that too, with the serpent in ground-ivy—two poets in wormwood—I'll have them both. Ay, and there's a lord mayor's feast in honeysuckle, and the whole court of aldermen in horn-beam; with the dragon of Wantley in box—all—all—I'll have 'em all, let my wife and Mr. Lovelace say what they will.

Enter MRS. DRUGGET.

Mrs. D. Did you send for me, lovey?

Drug. The yew-trees shall be cut into the giants of Guildhall, whether you will or not.

Mrs. D. Sure my own dear will do as he pleases.

Drug. And the pond, though you praise the green banks, shall be wall'd round, and I'll have a little fat boy in marble, spouting up water in the middle.

Mrs. D. My sweet, who hinders you?

Drug. Yes, and I'll buy the nurseryman's whole catalogue—Do you think, after retiring to live all the way here, almost four miles from London, that I won't do as I please in my own garden?

Mrs. D. My dear, but why are you in such a passion?

Drug. I'll have the lavender pig, and the Adam and Eve, and the dragon of Wantley, and all of 'em—and there shan't be a more romantic spot on the London road than mine.

Mrs. D. I'm sure it's as pretty as hands can make it.

Drug. I did it all myself, and I'll do more—And Mr. Lovelace shan't have my daughter.

Mrs. D. No! what's the matter now, Mr. Drugget?

Drug. He shall learn better manners than to abuse my house and gardens.—You put him in the head of it, but I'll disappoint ye both—And so you may go and tell Mr. Lovelace that the match is quite off.

Mrs. D. I can't comprehend all this, not I—but I'll tell him so, if you please, my dear—I am willing to give myself pain, if it will give you pleasure: must I give myself pain?—Don't ask me, pray don't—I don't like pain.

Drug. I am resolv'd, and it shall be so.

Mrs. D. Let it be so then. [*Cries*] Oh! oh! cruel man! I shall break my heart if the match is broke off—if it is not concluded to-morrow, send for an undertaker, and bury me the next day.

Drug. How! I don't want that neither—

Mrs. D. Oh! oh!—

Drug. I am your lord and master, my dear, but not your executioner—Before George, it must never be said that my wife died of too much compliance—Cheer up, my love—and this affair shall be settled as soon as sir Charles and lady Racket arrive.

Mrs. D. You bring me to life again—You know, my sweet, what an happy couple sir Charles and his lady are—Why should not we make our Nanoy as happy?

Re-enter DIMITY.

Dim. Sir Charles and his lady, ma'am.

Mrs. D. Oh! charming! I'm transported with joy—Where are they? I long to see 'em! [*Exit.*

Dim. Well, sir; the couple are arriv'd.

Drug. Yes, they do live happy indeed.

Dim. But how long will it last?

Drug. How long! don't forbode any ill, you jade—don't, I say—It will last during their lives, I hope.

Dim. Well, mark the end of it—Sir Charles, I know, is gay and good humour'd—but he can't bear the least contradiction, no, not in the merest trifle.

Drug. Hold your tongue—hold your tongue.

Dim. Yes, sir, I have done—and yet there is in the composition of sir Charles a certain humour, which, like the flying gout, gives no disturbance to the family till it settles in the head—When once it fixes there, mercy on every body about him! but here he comes.

[*Exit.*]

Enter SIR CHARLES RACKET.

Sir C. My dear sir, I kiss your hand—but why stand on ceremony? To find you up thus late, mortifies me beyond expression.

Drug. 'Tis but once in a way, sir Charles.

Sir C. My obligations to you are inexpressible; you have given me the most amiable of girls; our tempers accord like unisons in music.

Drug. Ah! that's what makes me happy in my old days; my children and my garden are all my care.

Sir C. And my friend Lovelace—he is to have our sister Nancy, I find.

Drug. Why my wife is so minded.

Sir C. Oh, by all means, let her be made happy—A very pretty fellow Lovelace—And as to that Mr.—Woodley I think you call him—he is but a plain, underbred, ill-fashioned sort of a—nobody knows him; he is not one of us—Oh, by all means marry her to one of us.

Drug. I believe it must be so—Would you take any refreshment?

Sir C. Nothing in nature—it is time to retire.

Drug. Well, well! good night then, sir Charles—Ha! here comes my daughter—Good night, sir Charles.

Sir C. Bon repos.

Drug. [*Going out*] My lady Racket, I'm glad to hear how happy you are, I won't detain you now—there's your good man waiting for you—good night, my girl.

[*Exit.*]

Sir C. I must humour this old putt, in order to be remember'd in his will.

Enter LADY RACKET.

Lady R. O la!—I'm quite fatigu'd—I can hardly move—why don't you help me, you barbarous man?

Sir C. There, take my arm—Was ever thing so pretty made to walk?

Lady R. But I won't be laugh'd at—I don't love you.

Sir C. Don't you?

Lady R. No. Dear me! this glove! why don't you help me off with my glove? pshaw!—You awkward thing, let it alone; you an't fit to be about me, I might as well not be married, for any use you are of—reach me a chair—you have no compassion for me—I am so glad to sit down—why do you drag me to routs?—You know I hate 'em.

Sir C. Oh! there's no existing, no breathing, unless one does as other people of fashion do.

Lady R. But I'm out of humour; I lost all my money.

Sir C. How much?

Lady R. Three hundred.

Sir C. Never fret for that—I don't value three hundred pounds to contribute to your happiness.

Lady R. Don't you?—Not value three hundred pounds to please me?

Sir C. You know I don't.

Lady R. Ah! you fond fool!—But I hate gaming—It almost metamorphoses a woman into a fury—Do you know that I was frightened at myself several times to-night—I had an huge oath at the very tip of my tongue.

Sir C. Had ye?

Lady R. I caught myself at it—and so I bit my lips—and then I was cram'd up in a corner of the room with such a strange party at a whist-table, looking at black and red spots—did you mind 'em?

Sir C. You know I was busy elsewhere.

Lady R. There was that strange, unaccountable woman, Mrs. Nightshade—She behav'd so strangely to

her husband, a poor, inoffensive, good-natur'd, good sort of a good-for-nothing kind of man—but she so teaz'd him—"How could you play that card? Ah, you've a head, and so has a pin—You're a numscull, you know you are—Ma'am, he has the poorest head in the world, he does not know what he is about; you know you don't—Ah, fie! I'm asham'd of you!"

Sir C. She has serv'd to divert you, I see.

Lady R. And then, to crown all—there was my lady Clackit, who runs on with an eternal volubility of nothing, out of all season, time, and place—In the very midst of the game she begins—"Lord, ma'am, I was apprehensive I should not be able to wait on your la'ship—my poor little dog, Pompey—the sweetest thing in the world—a spade led!—there's the knave—I was fetching a walk, me'm, the other morning in the Park—a fine frosty morning it was—I love frosty weather of all things—let me look at the last trick—and so, me'm, little Pompey—and if your la'ship was to see the dear creature pinch'd with the frost, and mincing his steps along the Mall—with his pretty, little, innocent face—I vow I don't know what to play—and so, me'm, while I was talking to captain Flimsey—your la'ship knows captain Flimsey—nothing but rubbish in my hand—I can't help it—and so, me'm, five odious frights of dogs beset my poor little Pompey—the dear creature has the heart of a lion, but who can resist five at once?—And so Pompey barked for assistance—the hurt he received was upon his chest—the doctor would not advise him to venture out till the wound is heal'd, for fear of an inflammation—Pray what's trumps?"

Sir C. My dear, you'd make a most excellent actress.

Lady R. Well, now let's go to rest—but, sir Charles, how shockingly you play'd that last rubber, when I stood looking over you!

Sir C. My love, I play'd the truth of the game.

Lady R. No, indeed, my dear, you play'd it wrong.

Sir C. Po! nonsense! you don't understand it.

Lady R. I beg your pardon, I'm allowed to play better than you.

Sir C. All conceit, my dear; I was perfectly right.

Lady R. No such thing, sir Charles; the diamond was the play.

Sir C. Po! po! ridiculous! the club was the card, against the world.

Lady R. Oh! no, no, no, I say it was the diamond.

Sir C. Zounds! madam, I say it was the club.

Lady R. What do you fly into such a passion for?

Sir C. 'Sdeath and fury! do you think I don't know what I'm about? I tell you once more the club was the judgment of it.

Lady R. May be so—have it your own way.

[Walks about and sings.

Sir C. Vexation! you're the strangest woman that ever liv'd; there's no conversing with you—Look'ye here, my lady Racket—it's the clearest case in the world, I'll make it plain in a moment.

Lady R. Well, sir! ha, ha, ha!

[With a sneering laugh.

Sir C. I had four cards left—a trump was led—they were six—no, no, no, they were seven, and we nine—then, you know—the beauty of the play was to—

Lady R. Well, now it's amazing to me, that you can't see it—give me leave, sir Charles—your left hand adversary had led his last trump—and he had before finess'd the club, and rough'd the diamond—now if you had put on your diamond—

Sir C. Zoons! madam, but we play'd for the odd trick.

Lady R. And sure the play for the odd trick—

Sir C. Death and fury! can't you hear me?

Lady R. Go on, sir.

Sir C. Zoons! hear me, I say—Will you hear me?

Lady R. I never heard the like in my life.

[Hums a Tune, and walks about fretfully.

Sir C. Why then you are enough to provoke the patience of a stoic. [Looks at her; she walks about, and laughs uneasily] Very well, madam—you know no more of the game than your father's leaden Hercules

on the top of the house—you know no more of whist than he does of gardening.

Lady R. Ha, ha, ha!

[Takes out a Glass, and settles her Hair.]

Sir C. You're a vile woman, and I'll not sleep another night under one roof with you.

Lady R. As you please, sir.

Sir C. Madam, it shall be as I please—I'll order my chariot this moment. *[Going]* I know how the cards should be play'd as well as any man in England, that let me tell you. *[Going]* And when your family were standing behind counters, measuring out tape, and bartering for Whitechapel needles, my ancestors, my ancestors, madam, were squandering away whole estates at cards; whole estates, my lady Racket. *[She hums a Tune, and he looks at her]* Why then, by all that's dear to me, I'll never exchange another word with you, good, bad, or indifferent—Lookye, my lady Racket—thus it stood—the trump being led, it was then my business—

Lady R. To play the diamond, to be sure.

Sir C. Damn it, I have done with you for ever, and so you may tell your father. *[Exit.]*

Lady R. What a passion the gentleman's in! ha, ha! *[Laughs in a peevish Manner]* I promise him I'll not give up my judgment.

Re-enter SIR CHARLES RACKET.

Sir C. My lady Racket, lookye, ma'am—once more, out of pure good nature—

Lady R. Sir, I am convinc'd of your good nature.

Sir C. That, and that only, prevails with me to tell you the club was the play.

Lady R. Well, be it so—I have no objection.

Sir C. It's the clearest point in the world—we were nine, and—

Lady R. And for that very reason—you know the club was the best in the house.

Sir C. There is no such thing as talking to you—

You're a base woman—I'll part from you for ever; you may live here with your father, and admire his fantastical evergreens, till you grow as fantastical yourself—I'll set out for London this instant—*[Stops at the Door]* The club was not the best in the house.

Lady R. How calm you are! Well!—I'll go to bed—will you come?—You had better—come then—you shall come to bed—not come to bed when I ask you!—Poor sir Charles! *[Looks and laughs; then exit.]*

Sir C. That ease is provoking. *[Crosses to the opposite Door where she went out]* I tell you the diamond was not the play, and I here take my final leave of you. *[Walks back as fast as he can]* I am resolv'd upon it, and I know the club was not the best in the house.

[Exit.]

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I.

Enter DIMITY.

Dim. Ha, ha, ha! oh, heavens! I shall expire in a fit of langhing—this is the modish couple that were so happy—such a quarrel as they have had—the whole house is in an uproar—ha, ha! a rare proof of the happiness they enjoy in high life. I shall never hear people of fashion mentioned again but I shall be ready to die in a fit of laughter—ho, ho, ho! this is three weeks after marriage, I think.

Enter DRUGGET.

Drug. Hey! how! what's the matter, Dimity?—What am I call'd down stairs for?

Dim. Why, there's two people of fashion—

[Stifles a laugh.]

Drug. Why, you sancy minx!—Explain this moment.

Dim. The fond couple have been together by the ears this half hour—Are you satisfied now?

Drug. Ay!—what, have they quarrell'd—what was it about?

Dim. Something above my comprehension, and yours too, I believe—People in high life understand their own forms best—And here comes one that can unriddle the whole affair. [Exit.

Enter SIR CHARLES RACKET.

Sir C. [To the People within] I say let the horses be put to this moment—So, Mr. Drugget.

Drug. Sir Charles, here's a terrible bustle—I did not expect this—what can be the matter?

Sir C. I have been us'd by your daughter in so base, so contemptuous a manner, that I am determined not to stay in this house to-night.

Drug. This is a thunderbolt to me! After seeing how elegantly and fashionably you liv'd together, to find now all sunshine vanish'd—Do, sir Charles, let me heal this breach, if possible.

Sir C. Sir, 'tis impossible—I'll not live with her a day longer.

Drug. Nay, nay, don't be over hasty—let me entreat you, go to bed and sleep upon it—in the morning, when you're cool—

Sir C. Oh, sir, I am very cool, I assure—ha, ha!—it is not in her power, sir, to—a—a—to disturb the serenity of my temper—Don't imagine that I'm in a passion—I'm not so easily ruffled as you may imagine—But quietly and deliberately I can repay the injuries done me by a false, ungrateful, deceitful wife.

Drug. The injuries done you by a false, ungrateful wife! My daughter, I hope—

Sir C. Her character is now fully known to me—she's a vile woman! that's all I have to say, sir.

Drug. Hey! how!—a vile woman—what has she done—I hope she is not capable—

Sir C. I shall enter into no detail, Mr. Drugget; the time and circumstances won't allow it at present—But depend upon it I have done with her—a low,

unpolish'd, uneducated, false, imposing——See if the horses are put to.

Drug. Mercy on me! in my old days to hear this.

Enter MRS. DRUGGET.

Mrs. D. Deliver me! I am all over in such a tremble——Sir Charles, I shall break my heart if there's any thing amiss.

Sir C. Madam, I am very sorry, for your sake——but there is no possibility of living with her.

Mrs. D. My poor dear girl! What can she have done?

Sir C. What all her sex can do; the very spirit of them all.

Drug. Ay, ay, ay!—She's bringing foul disgrace upon us——This comes of her marrying a man of fashion.

Sir C. Fashion, sir!—that should have instructed her better—she might have been sensible of her happiness——Whatever you may think of the fortune you gave her, my rank in life claims respect—claims obedience, attention, truth, and love, from one raised in the world, as she has been by an alliance with me.

Drug. And let me tell you, however you may estimate your quality, my daughter is dear to me.

Sir C. And, sir, my character is dear to me.

Drug. Yet you must give me leave to tell you——

Sir C. I won't hear a word.

Drug. Not in behalf of my own daughter?

Sir C. Nothing can excuse her—'tis to no purpose—she has married above her; and if that circumstance makes the lady forget herself, she at least shall see that I can, and will support my own dignity.

Drug. But, sir, I have a right to ask——

Mrs. D. Patience, my dear; be a little calm.

Drug. Mrs. Drugget, do you have patience; I must and will inquire.

Mrs. D. Don't be so hasty, my love; have some respect for sir Charles's rank; don't be violent with a man of his fashion.

Drug. Hold your tongue, woman, I say—you're not a person of fashion at least—My daughter was ever a good girl.

Sir C. I have found her out.

Drug. Oh! then it is all over—and it does not signify arguing about it.

Mrs. D. That ever I should live to see this hour! how the unfortunate girl could take such wickedness in her head, I can't imagine—I'll go and speak to the unhappy creature this moment. [Exit.]

Sir C. She stands detected now—detected in her truest colours.

Drug. Well, grievous as it may be, let me hear the circumstances of this unhappy business.

Sir C. Mr. Drugget, I have not leisure now—but her behaviour has been so exasperating, that I shall make the best of my way to town—My mind is fixed—She sees me no more; and so, your servant, sir. [Exit.]

Drug. What a calamity has here befallen us! a good girl, and so well dispos'd, till the evil communication of high life, and fashionable vices, turn'd her to folly. [Exit.]

Re-enter MRS. DRUGGET and DIMITY, with LADY RACKET.

Lady R. A cruel, barbarous man! to quarrel in this unaccountable manner, to alarm the whole house, and expose me and himself too.

Mrs. D. Oh, child! I never thought it would have come to this—your shame won't end here! it will be all over St. James's parish by to-morrow morning.

Lady R. Well, if it must be so, there's one comfort, the story will tell more to his disgrace than mine.

Dim. As I'm a sinner, and so it will, madam. He deserves what he has met with, I think.

Mrs. D. Dimity, don't you encourage her—you shock me to hear you speak so—I did not think you had been so harden'd.

Lady R. Harden'd do you call it?—I have liv'd in the world to very little purpose, if such trifles as this are to disturb my rest.

Mrs. D. You wicked girl!—Do you call it a trifle to be guilty of falsehood to your husband.

Lady R. How! [*Turns short and stares at her*] Well, I protest and vow I don't comprehend all this—has sir Charles accus'd me of any impropriety in my conduct?

Mrs. D. Oh! too true, he has—he has found you out, and you have behav'd basely, he says.

Lady R. Madam!

Mrs. D. You have fallen into frailty, like many others of your sex, he says; and he is resolv'd to come to a separation directly.

Lady R. Why then, if he is so base a wretch as to dishonour me in that manner, his heart shall ache before I live with him again.

Dim. Hold to that, ma'am, and let his head ache into the bargain.

Lady R. Then let your doors be open'd for him this very moment—let him return to London—if he does not, I'll lock myself up, and the false one shan't approach me, though he beg on his knees at my very door—a base, injurious man! [*Exit.*]

Mrs. D. Dimity, do let us follow, and hear what she has to say for herself. [*Exit.*]

Dim. She has excuse enough, I warrant her—What a noise is here indeed!—I have liv'd in polite families, where there was no such bustle made about nothing. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter SIR CHARLES RACKET and DRUGGET.

Sir C. 'Tis in vain, sir; my resolution is taken—

Drug. Well, but consider, I am her father—indulge me only till we hear what the girl has to say in her defence.

Sir C. She can have nothing to say—no excuse can palliate such behaviour.

Drug. Don't be too positive—there may be some mistake.

Sir C. No mistake—did not I see her, hear her myself?

SCENE 1. AFTER MARRIAGE.

Drug. Lack-a-day! then I am an unfortunate man!

Sir C. She will be unfortunate too—with all my heart—she may thank herself—she might have been happy, had she been so dispos'd.

Drug. Why truly I think she might.

Re-enter MRS. DRUGGET.

Mrs. D. I wish you'd moderate your anger a little—and let us talk over this affair with temper—my daughter denies every tittle of your charge.

Sir C. Denies it! denies it!

Mrs. D. She does indeed.

Sir C. And that aggravates her fault.

Mrs. D. She vows you never found her out in any thing that was wrong.

Sir C. So! she does not allow it to be wrong then!—Madam, I tell you again, I know her thoroughly; I say, I have found her out, and I am now acquainted with her character.

Mrs. D. Then you are in opposite stories—she swears, my dear Mr. Drugget, the poor girl swears she never was guilty of the smallest infidelity to her husband in her born days.

Sir C. And what then?—What if she does say so?

Mrs. D. And if she says truly, it is hard her character should be blown upon without just cause.

Sir C. And is she therefore to behave ill in other respects? I never charg'd her with infidelity to me, madam—there I allow her innocent.

Drug. And did not you charge her then?

Sir C. No, sir, I never dreamt of such a thing.

Drug. Why then, if she's innocent, let me tell you, you're a scandalous person.

Mrs. D. Pr'ythee, my dear—

Drug. Be quiet—though he is a man of quality, I will tell him of it—did not I fine for sheriff?—Yes, you are a scandalous person to defame an honest man's daughter.

Sir C. What have you taken into your head now?

Drug. You charg'd her with falsehood to your bed.

Sir C. No—never—never.

Drug. But I say you did—you call'd yourself a cuckold—did not he, wife?

Mrs. D. Yes, lovey, I'm witness.

Sir C. Absurd! I said no such thing.

Drug. But I aver you did.

Mrs. D. You did indeed, sir.

Sir C. But I tell you no—positively no.

Drug. Mrs. D. And I say yes—positively yes.

Sir C. 'Sdeath! this is all madness—

Drug. You said she follow'd the ways of most of her sex.

Sir C. I said so—and what then?

Drug. There he owns it—owns that he call'd himself a cuckold—and without rhyme or reason into the bargain.

Sir C. I never own'd any such thing.

Drug. You own'd it even now—now—now—now.

Re-enter DIMITY, in a fit of Laughing.

Dim. What do you think it was all about—ha, ha! the whole secret is come out, ha, ha!—It was all about a game of cards—ha, ha!—

Drug. A game of cards!

Dim. [*Laughing*] It was all about a club and a diamond. [*Runs out laughing.*]

Drug. And was that all, sir Charles?

Sir C. And enough too, sir.

Drug. And was that what you found her out in?

Sir C. I can't bear to be contradicted when I'm clear that I'm in the right.

Drug. I never heard such a heap of nonsense in all my life. Why does not he go and beg her pardon, then?

Sir C. I beg her pardon! I won't debase myself to any of you—I shan't forgive her, you may rest assur'd.

[*Exit.*]

Drug. Now there—there's a pretty fellow for you.

Mrs. D. I'll step and prevail on my lady Racket to speak to him—then all will be well.

[*Exit.*]

Drug. A ridiculous fop! I'm glad it's no worse, however.

Enter NANCY.

So, Nancy—you seem in confusion, my girl!

Nan. How can one help it?—With all this noise in the house, and you're going to marry me as ill as my sister—I hate Mr. Lovelace.

Drug. Why so, child?

Nan. I know these people of quality despise us all out of pride, and would be glad to marry us out of avarice.

Drug. The girl's right.

Nan. They marry one woman, live with another, and love only themselves.

Drug. And then quarrel about a card.

Nan. I don't want to be a gay lady—I want to be happy.

Drug. And so you shall—don't fright yourself, child—step to your sister, bid her make herself easy—go, and comfort her, go.

Nan. Yes, sir.

[*Exit.*

Drug. I'll step and settle the matter with Mr. Woodley this moment.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Another Apartment.*

SIR CHARLES RACKET *discovered with a Pack of Cards in his Hand.*

Sir C. Never was any thing like her behaviour—I can pick out the very cards I had in my hand, and then 'tis as plain as the sun—there—now—there—no—damn it—no—there it was—now let's see—they had four by honours—and we play'd for the odd trick—damnation!—honours were divided—ay! honours were divided—and then a trump was led—and the other side had the—confusion!—this preposterous woman has put it all out of my head—[*Puts the Cards into his Pocket*] Mighty well, madam; I have done with you.

Enter MRS. DRUGGET.

Mrs. D. Come, sir Charles, let me prevail—Come with me and speak to her.

Sir C. I don't desire to see her face.

Mrs. D. If you were to see her all bath'd in tears, I am sure it would melt your very heart.

Sir C. Madam, it shall be my fault if ever I am treated so again—I'll have nothing to say to her—*[Going, stops]* Does she give up the point?

Mrs. D. She does, she agrees to any thing.

Sir C. Does she allow that the club was the play?

Mrs. D. Just as you please—she's all submission.

Sir C. Does she own that the club was not the best in the house?

Mrs. D. She does—she does.

Sir C. Then I'll stop and speak to her—I never was clearer in any thing in my life. *[Exit.*

Mrs. D. Lord love 'em, they'll make it up now—and then they'll be as happy as ever. *[Exit.*

Enter DRUGGET and LOVELACE.

Drug. So, Mr. Lovelace! any news from above stairs? Is this absurd quarrel at an end—Have they made it up?

Love. Oh! a mere bagatelle, sir—these little fracas among the better sort of people never last long—elegant trifles cause elegant disputes, and we come together elegantly again—as you see—for here they come, in perfect good humour.

Re-enter SIR CHARLES RACKET and MRS. DRUGGET, with LADY RACKET.

Sir C. Mr. Drugget, I embrace you; sir, you see me now in the most perfect harmony of spirits.

Drug. What, all reconciled again?

Lady R. All made up, sir—I knew how to bring him to my lure—This is the first difference, I think, we ever had, sir Charles?

Sir C. And I'll be sworn it shall be the last.

Drug. I am happy at last—Sir Charles, I can spare you an image to put on the top of your house in London.

Sir C. Infinitely obliged to you.

Drug. Well, well!—It's time to retire now—I am glad to see you reconciled—and now I'll wish you a good night, sir Charles—Mr. Lovelace, this is your way—fare ye well both—I am glad your quarrels are at an end—This way, Mr. Lovelace.

[*Exeunt Drugget, Mrs. Drugget, and Lovelace.*]

Lady R. Ah! you're a sad man, sir Charles, to behave to me as you have done.

Sir C. My dear, I grant it—and such an absurd quarrel too—ha, ha!

Lady R. Yes—ha, ha!—about such a trifle.

Sir C. It's pleasant how we could both fall into such an error—ha, ha!

Lady R. Ridiculous, beyond expression—ha, ha!

Sir C. And then the mistake your father and mother fell into—ha, ha!

Lady R. That too is a diverting part of the story—ha, ha!—But, sir Charles, must I stay and live with my father till I grow as fantastical as his own evergreens?

Sir C. No, no, pr'ythee—don't remind me of my folly.

Lady R. Ah! my relations were all standing behind counters, selling Whitechapel needles, while your family were spending great estates.

Sir C. Nay, nay, spare my blushes.

Lady R. How could you say so harsh a thing?—I don't love you.

Sir C. It was indelicate, I grant it.

Lady R. Am I a vile woman?

Sir C. How can you, my angel?

Lady R. I shan't forgive you!—I'll have you on your knees for this. [*Sings, and plays with him*]*—Go, naughty man.—Ah! sir Charles!*

Sir C. The rest of my life shall aim at convincing you how sincerely I love—

Lady R. [*Sings*] Go, naughty man, I can't abide you.—Well! come let us go to rest. [*Going*] Ah, sir Charles!—now it is all over, the diamond was the play.

Sir C. Oh no, no, no,—my dear! ha, ha!—it was the club indeed.

Lady R. Indeed, my love, you're mistaken.

Sir C. Oh, no, no, no.

Lady R. But I say, yes, yes, yes— [*Both laughing.*

Sir C. Pshaw! no such thing—ha, ha!

Lady R. 'Tis so, indeed—ha, ha!

Sir C. No, no, no—you'll make me die with laughing.

Lady R. Ay, and you make me laugh too—ha, ha!

[*Toying with him.*

Enter Footman.

Footm. Your honour's cap and slippers.

Sir C. Ay, lay down my nightcap—and here, take these shoes off. [*He takes them off, and leaves them at a distance*] Indeed, my lady Racket, you make me ready to expire with laughing—ha, ha!

Lady R. You may laugh—but I'm right, notwithstanding.

Sir C. How can you say so?

Lady R. How can you say otherwise?

Sir C. Well now mind me, my lady Racket—We can now talk of this matter in good humour—We can discuss it coolly.

Lady R. So we can—and it's for that reason I venture to speak to you—are these the ruffles I bought for you?

Sir C. They are, my dear.

Lady R. They are very pretty—but indeed you played the card wrong.

Sir C. How can you talk so?— [*Somewhat peevish.*

Lady R. See there now—

Sir C. Listen to me—this was the affair—

Lady R. Pshaw! fiddlestick! hear me first.

Sir C. Po—no—damn it, let me speak.

Lady R. Very well, sir! fly out again.

Sir C. Look here now—here's a pack of cards—now you shall be convinced—

Lady R. You may talk till to-morrow; I know I'm right. [*Walks about.*]

Sir C. Why then, by all that's perverse, you are the most headstrong—Can't you look here now—here are the very cards.

Lady R. Go on; you'll find it out at last.

Sir C. Damn it! will you let a man show you. Po! it's all nonsense—I'll talk no more about it—[*Puts up the Cards*] Come, we'll go to bed. [*Going*] Now only stay a moment—[*Takes out the Cards*] Now, mind me—see here—

Lady R. No, it does not signify—your head will be clearer in the morning—I'll go to bed.

Sir C. Stay a moment, can't ye?

Lady R. No—my head begins to ache—[*Affectedly.*]

Sir C. Why then, damn the cards—there—there [*Throwing the Cards about*] and there, and there—You may go to bed by yourself; and confusion seize me if I live a moment longer with you—[*Putting on his Shoes again*] No, never, madam.

Lady R. Take your own way, sir.

Sir C. Now then, I tell you once more you are a vile woman.

Lady R. Ha, ha! don't make me laugh again, sir Charles.

Sir C. I wish I had never seen your face—I wish I was a thousand miles off; will you sit down quietly and let me convince you? [*Sits down.*]

Lady R. I'm disposed to walk about, sir, I thank you.

Sir C. Why then, may I perish if ever—a block-head—an idiot I was to marry [*Walks about*] such a provoking—impertinent—[*She sits down*]—Damnation!—I am so clear in the thing—she is not worth my notice—[*Sits down, turns his Back, and looks uneasy*]

I'll take no more pains about it—[*Pauses for some time, then looks at her*] Is not it very strange that you won't hear me?

Lady R. Sir, I am very ready to hear you.

Sir C. Very well then—very well—my dear—you remember how the game stood.

Lady R. I wish you'd untie my necklace, it hurts me.

Sir C. Why can't you listen?

Lady R. I tell you it hurts me terribly.

Sir C. Why thus—you may be as wrong as you please, and may I never hold four by honours, if I ever endeavour to set you right again. [Exit.

Re-enter DRUGGET, MRS. DRUGGET, and LOVELACE; with WOODLEY and NANCY.

Drug. What's here to do now?

Lady R. Never was such a man born—I did not say a word to the gentleman—and yet he has been raving about the room like a madman.

Drug. And about a club again, I suppose.—Come hither, Nancy; Mr. Woodley, she is yours for life.

Mrs. D. My dear, how can you be so—

Drug. It shall be so—take her for life, Mr. Woodley.

Wood. My whole life shall be devoted to her happiness.

Love. The devil! and so I am to be left in the lurch in this manner, am I?

Lady R. Oh! this is only one of those polite disputes which people of quality, who have nothing else to differ about, must always be liable to—This will all be made up.

Drug. Never tell me—it's too late now—Mr. Woodley, I recommend my girl to your care—I shall have nothing now to think of but my greens, and my images, and my shrubbery—though, mercy on all married folks, say I! for these wranglings are, I am afraid, what we must all come to.

Lady R. [*Advancing*] What we must all come to?
What?—Come to what?

Must broils and quarrels be the marriage lot?
If that's the wise, deep meaning of our poet,
The man's a fool! a blockhead! and I'll show it.

What could induce him in an age so nice,
So fam'd for virtue, so refin'd from vice,
To form a plan so trivial, false, and low?
As if a belle could quarrel with a beau.
Shun strife, ye fair, and once a contest o'er,
Wake to a blaze the dying flame no more. [*Exeunt.*



The following AIR is omitted in the Representation.

AIR.—NANCY.

When first the dear youth passing by
Disclos'd his fair form to my sight,
I gaz'd, but I could not tell why;
My heart it went throb with delight.
As nearer he drew, those sweet eyes
Where with their dear meaning so bright,
I trembled, and lost in surprise,
My heart it went throb with delight.
When his lips their dear accents did try
The return of my love to excite,
I feign'd, yet began to guess why
My heart it went throb with delight.
We chang'd the stol'n glance, the fond smile,
Which lovers alone read aright;
We look'd, and we sigh'd, yet the while
Our hearts they went throb with delight.
Consent I soon blush'd, with a sigh,
My promise I ventur'd to plight;
Come, Hymen, we then shall know why
Our hearts they go throb with delight.

TWENTY PER CENT.;

OR,

MY FATHER.

A Farce, in Two Acts. .

AS PERFORMED AT

THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

*Author of Past Ten o'Clock, What Next? The Cabinet, Jew and Doctor,
Birth-day, Metrical History of England, &c. &c.*

CORRECTLY GIVEN FROM THE AUTHOR'S COPY.



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1816.



TWENTY PER CENT.

ALTHOUGH very successful in its first representation, was acted but four nights. It would not have been inserted in this collection, but that there was strong evidence, from anonymous letters and other conveyances of "friendly hints," that a combination of persons, who are no enemies to receiving "**TWENTY PER CENT.**" in real life, were unwilling to allow the author so much interest on the stage. The story is from the French,

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted at Drury Lane.

<i>Old Dunsford</i>	Mr. Gattie.
<i>Charles Dunsford, his Son</i>	Mr. Barnard.
<i>Gripe, an old Usurer</i>	Mr. Bartley.
<i>Timothy, Vuleet to Charles.</i>	Mr. Harley.
<i>Jacob, Servant to old Dunsford.</i> . .	Mr. Oxberry.
	Mr. Minton.
	Mr. Maddocks.
<i>Tradesmen, Creditors of Charles</i> .	Mr. Ebsworth.
	Mr. Miller.
	Mr. Evans.
	Mr. Baxton.
<i>Servant</i>	Mr. Appleby.
<i>Lady Emily, a young rich Widow</i> .	Mrs. Orger.
<i>Fanny, her Attendant</i>	Miss Kelly.

SCENE—BATH.

Time—That of Representation.

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. *An Apartment.*

Enter LADY EMILY and FANNY.

Lady E. No, Fanny, no, I tell you once more, much as you think me in love, I'll never have him without his father's consent.

Fanny. Then who else will you please to marry, madam?

Lady E. Who else? Why, no one else. He's a little wild; but he'll reform: his extravagance has so much of liberality and benevolence, that it takes away one half of his folly.

Fanny. While you shut your eyes on the other.

Lady E. How would you act in my place, Fanny?

Fanny. As you do, I dare say, madam. Ladies and lovers, and servants and sweethearts, have much the same feelings, only they've a different way of expressing them.

Lady E. Indeed! then, I suppose, while Mr. Dansford is respectfully paying his addresses to me in the drawing-room—

Fanny. Mr. Timothy, his gentleman, courts me in the kitchen.

Lady E. The master makes me jealous by flirting with another lady, who is seen to pay him a visit.

Fanny. And the man puts me in a passion by keeping company with another lady's—woman.

Lady E. I, pretending to be quite easy abroad, shed torrents of tears at home, am denied to my lover, and, for the sake of appearances, am obliged to be civil to my rival.

Fanny. While I, reddening like a turkey, bang the street door in Tim's face, and box the ears of his minx in the first place I meet her.

Lady E. I could forgive his extravagance—but, no; since he can find charms and attractions in another—

Enter JACOB.

Well, who's this?

[Goes up the Stage.]

Fanny. Do you hear, sir? Tell the lady who you are.

Jacob. I munna.

Fanny. You munna? Why then walk down stairs again.

Jacob. We be at Bath, hen't we? And this be a lodging-house?

Fanny. Is that any reason why you should break into lady Emily's apartments?

Jacob. No, that hen't the reason; I know it be lady Emily's apartment; and found it out clever enough, as soon as they showed I the door—seeing as I be ordered to bring her a letter from one squire Dunsford.

Lady E. A letter! and from Dunsford? I won't take it.

Fanny. That's right; don't, my lady; at least, don't take it at first.—Come, sir, set off with your impudence, for my lady won't take it.

Jacob. I shall leave it though; for squire Dunsford sent I on purpose.

Fanny. Then it was very rude of him not to send his own gentleman. Where's Timothy?

[Snatches the Letter from him, and gives it to Lady Emily.]

Jacob. Nay, how should I know? This Bath be a queer place. If a young man bring a letter in a genteel manner, they clik it out on his hand, and cry "Where's Timothy?"

Lady E. Fanny! come here this instant.

Fanny. What's the matter, my lady?

Jacob. Rum postage! Well, if ever I—— [*Going.*]

Lady E. Stop, friend. Is your name Jacob?

Jacob. Yes, it be.

Lady E. Then there's a guinea for you.

Jacob. A guinea!—'Cod, Bath be a prettier place than I thought. So you give I a guinea because my name be Jacob. Well, by Jacob then I'm like to grow a rich man.

Lady E. Run directly, with my dutiful regards to my dear, dear Mr. Dunsford, and beg him to do me the honour to walk up directly.

Fanny. Ma'am! my lady! dutiful regards!

Jacob. He can't walk up directly, my lady, because he be gone a swimming up to his chin wi' ladies and gentlemen in the pump-room, as they call'n. He ha' got into hot water wi' all the company; but as soon as he be rubbed dry, and ha' gotten his wig powdered, he'll come and welcome. But doan't ye, young woman, be so cross and snappish to him, like as you war to me, for he be a justice o'peace; and if you ax him, "Where's Timothy?" 'ecod, he'll be for showing his authority. [*Exit.*]

Fanny. Will it be too much to ask your ladyship to explain?

Lady E. Hear the letter. [*Reads*] Dear madam——

Fanny. Madam, indeed! That's not the way Tim writes to me.

Lady E. [*Reads*] The long vacation giving liberty to my law concerns, the weather open, consols shut, and omnium up, I determined to pop down to Bath, and see how my son comes on with your ladyship.

Fanny. His son! Ho, ho! I begin to——

Lady E. Hold your tongue, Fanny. [*Reads*] I'm told he's very much in debt, and very much in love. To cure

him, he shall marry your ladyship out of hand, and I'll give him a fortune—which I'll thank you to keep to yourself, because I mean my arrival to be a secret till I see whether he is worthy the regard of his, and I hope your, affectionate father, CHARLES DUNSFORD.

Fanny. O dear, O dear! this is delightful indeed!—And so—

Lady E. Here's a postscript. [*Reads*] As your ladyship and I have never met before, I thought it best to write, to save formalities of introduction; and I send this by my man Jacob, to beg you will not mention my arrival to my son.

Fanny. And how came it that your ladyship and the old gentleman never met?

Lady E. Because he was in India till I was married; and just as he returned, I went to reside at my late husband's in Wales: a twelvemonth after whose demise I came to Bath. [*A Tap at the Door.*]

Fanny. Some one's at the door.—Come in.—Oh, this is young Mr. Dunsford's man. It's Timothy, I declare. Hide the letter, pray, my lady.

Enter TIMOTHY.

Bless us, how humble he looks!

Tim. My lady Emily, I venture to come with shame, sorrow, and repentance, on the part of my poor master; who, not being able to look up since he languished under your ladyship's just mortification and displeasure, has sent me to endeavour to convince your ladyship that you've used him barbarously.

Fanny. That's a monstrous fine speech indeed! but you are only fit for fine speeches.

Tim. And always sure of your good word, Mrs. Nimbletongue.

Lady E. Had your master come himself, I might have perhaps been induced to listen to his defence; but to send a mere verbal, incomprehensible excuse by his servant, is only to aggravate his fault.

Fanny. True, my lady, a poor apology indeed; and Tim's delivering it, makes bad worse.

Tim. Perhaps this is a better then, my lady.

[*Gives a Letter.*

Lady E. And will you vouch for the sincerity of this?

Tim. I'll swear, madam, by all that a gentleman's gentleman ought to swear by, that every syllable in that letter expresses the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. I wrote every syllable of it myself. I write all my master's letters.—Ahem! [*Lady Emily retires, and sits down to read it*] If I know or can guess at one line of the contents of that letter, may my master lose the lady, and I never get a shilling of my wages.

[*Aside.*

Fanny. What's that you're saying, sir?

Tim. I say it's very cruel, hard-hearted, and barbarous of you, madam Fanny, whom I never offended in my life, to be so unkind to me, merely because my master has displeased your lady. What are his gallantries to me?—Am I faithless because he's untrue?

Fanny. Dear, how pathetic!—As we say in France, *its tel maitre, tel valet.*

Tim. Tell who?

Fanny. Like master, like man, I dare say.

Tim. I dare say it is; for he's a devilish handsome fellow, and the women all run after him; but as to my running after them, no, Fanny, no; you're my whole, sole, past, present, future, positive, comparative, and superlative, upon my honour!

Fanny. Well then, Mr. Timothy, I will believe you; from this time forth I'll never suspect a man who can make such winning protestations; but one must feel a little for one's lady, you know.

Tim. Yes, poor thing, one must pity her, poor devil! It's in our sphere that true sincerity is found. Ah, my dear Fanny, take my advice: never wish to rise above it; and should you lose your Timothy, never give your hand to a great man; never marry a man with more than a thousand a year.

Fanny. I don't think I shall, after your declaration.—That seems a plaguy long letter of my lady's.

Tim. And I am impatient for an answer.—Oh, bless your dear little——

Lady E. [*Rises*] Timothy!

Fanny. Timothy!—don't you hear?

Tim. Yes, my lady.

Lady E. You'll vouch the truth of every word in this letter?

Tim. Madam, I have said it.

Lady E. Then my heart's at ease. It's generous of you too. But you are quite aware that I depend on you? I shall read you a part of this letter.

Fanny. Ay, do, my lady. Now for it.

Lady E. Fanny, leave the room.

Fanny. Madam! Here's want of confidence!

Lady E. I have a particular reason for it—go.

Tim. You're to go, Fanny, don't you hear?—Her ladyship does me the honour to desire that we may be left alone.—I'll tell you all presently. [*Apart.*]

Fanny. I shan't take your word, nor trust your tongue, while I have ears of my own. [*Apart, and exit.*]

Lady E. I sent Fanny away for both your sakes, as you must be well aware.

Tim. O, as to that, we have no secrets, my lady.

Lady E. Listen, and remember it's all true.

Tim. That I'll answer for.

Lady E. Your master writes—[*Reads*] *As for the lady, whose calling at my apartments gave you so much offence, I protest it was only a chere amie of my valet de chambre; who, to save his place, having promised to tell the truth, will plead his own apology for having been the innocent cause of your anxiety, and my disgrace.*

Re-enter FANNY, hastily.

Fanny. A very innocent cause indeed, my lady. Oh, you monster!

Tim. Nay, but my dear Fanny, I didn't know my master meant to lay the blame on me.

Lady E. Why, isn't it true, then?

Fanny. True! to be sure it is; he knows it is, and

he solemnly declared just now he'd vouch for every syllable of that letter.

Tim. A pretty situation I am in. [*Aside*] Why, Fanny—that is—my lady, I mean—there was no lady came to me.

Lady E. There was not?

Tim. Why, that is, my lady, there might be a——

Fanny. There was!

Tim. No, no, Fanny, there was only——

Lady E. Tell your master I'll never see him more.

Fanny. Tell his man, ditto. [*Slaps his Face.*]

Tim. I tell you both, ladies, that——

Lady E. That the meanness of his conduct in first committing a fault, and then denying it, has at length determined me; and unless his father can be prevailed on to pardon him, I give him up for ever. [*Exit.*]

Fanny. And assure yourself, Mr. Timothy, that your confession while you thought me out of the room, has determined me, unless my lady can be prevailed on to pardon your master, to give you up for ever. [*Exit.*]

Tim. Whew! a very pretty situation I've got into. If I follow, and endeavour to convince her ladyship that my master speaks the truth (which, between friends, would be telling a falsehood), I shall lose my sweetheart Fanny; and if I endeavour to convince Fanny that the letter's all a fudge, why then my master will lose the lady. Oh, love! love! what a plague thou art, and what a fine subject for a fine speech.

Re-enter FANNY, listening.

A man in love's like a ship in a storm: hopes, fears, crosses, and agitations, dance him upon the waves of passion; now up to the moon, now down to the devil knows where, till throwing overboard every weighty and valuable atom of sense, reason, or reflection, as his head grows lighter, the helm of his heart gets more unmanageable, and, spite of all his efforts to steer safe into port, the quicksands of jealousy, shoals of deceit, whirlwinds of caprice, and breakers of disappointment, bring him bump ashore; crash goes cordage, timbers,

and tackling; while the syren who occasions all the mischief, laughs at the wretch she leaves behind her.

Fanny. Does she so, Mr. Eloquence? I could make just such another fine speech myself if I would, but time's too precious. My lady and I are convinced you both deceive us; and as your master doesn't choose to venture into my lady's presence, she's determined to pay him a visit.

Tim. Not now if you please——He has old Gripe the money-lender with him. [*Aside*] He has just now a person with him, who——

Fanny. Oh yes, I know, a lady.

Tim. Indeed no more a lady than you are.

Fanny. I know better.

Tim. Nay, I assure you, it is not only a gentleman, but an old gentleman, with whom he will be locked up these two hours.

Fanny. Don't tell me about old gentlemen: unless there was a lady in the case, the gay, gallant Mr. Dunsford wouldn't stay at home two hours for his own father.

Tim. His father, eh! a thought strikes me that may serve my master, and make up all with my lady; leave me alone for a clever idea. [*Aside*] It will do! it will do! it will do.

[*Half aside.*]

Fanny. What will do? Hatching more tricks? By-the-by, there is an old gentleman comes to him sometimes rather in a mysterious manner.

Tim. So there is; but it—it—isn't a money-lender. In short, I'll tell you, Fanny: you've hit it; it was to have been a secret; but you won't tell.

Fanny. Oh no, I can keep a secret as well as you.

Tim. Then this old gentleman is my master's father; he's going to pay all our debts, and give consent to our marrying into your family.

Fanny. Indeed, that's lucky.

Tim. Isn't it? But he doesn't wish his arrival known till all is settled; therefore pray let your lady stay till——

[*Bell rings.*]

Fanny. That's her bell. I see what you mean: she had better not call; and so I shall advise her. Good

morning, Mr. Timothy; you needn't fear her troubling you.—I see there's something we mustn't find out, and I'll advise my lady to go directly. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Tim. Now then I'll go and convince my master that he has no fool for a valet: it's a pity he's so involved. "Tim," said he, when he hired me, "I turned away my last servant because he couldn't keep my creditors at bay: now you seem to have more dexterity; you look as if you could tell a lie, and have all the appearance of an accomplished rogue." So flattering a compliment to my face won my heart for ever, and I'm determined not to disappoint his good opinion. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II. CHARLES DUNSFORD'S Lodgings.

Enter CHARLES DUNSFORD.

Charles. Where the deuce does this fellow of mine stay? I shall be broken in upon by a thousand impertinent duns. Did Emily suspect how deeply I'm in debt, and that it was a bailiff disguised like a woman who was seen in my apartment, she would never see me more.

Enter TIMOTHY.

Now, sir!

Tim. It's all settled, sir; the lady believes every thing you've written her, and so did her ladyship's woman. The next time you do me the honour to mention my name in your notes, couldn't you give me a hint of the nature and number of the sins I am to father?

Charles. Then I may fly to my Emily.

Tim. If you do fly, let it be from old Gripe, for it's just twelve o'clock, and you may expect him for his money every moment.

Charles. Was he appointed this morning?

Tim. Yes, sir; you know we've an appointment with a creditor every morning, and, as I don't like to write down suspicious names, for fear of losing my pocket-book, you may see how I have entered them. I give to each, instead of his own name, the name of the day on which he is to call. Let me see: Friday means Gripe. Friday's an unlucky day, and I fear he'll find it so. Then,

here's Thursday was desired to call next Wednesday; Tuesday put off till Monday morning; and Saturday is to come at the beginning of the week.

Gripe. [*Speaks without*] I know he's at home.

Charles. 'Sdeath, here the old rogue comes; what shall I say to him?

Tim. Leave me to say, sir; and do you retire and listen; if you think I want assistance, then you can appear.

Charles. If there is a state of punishment for error on this side styx, it is to be in debt, and with the feelings of gentlemanly pride remaining, to be forced to play the part of an evasive, contemptible scoundrel.

[*Exit.*

Enter GRIPE.

Gripe. Who's a scoundrel?

Tim. Not you, Mr. Gripe, not you. Oh no, I've been waiting for you a long time with——

Gripe. With the money?

Tim. With impatience.

Gripe. I beg ten thousand pardons for being so late; but I've been performing a charitable action; visiting a prisoner.

Tim. Worthy gentleman!

Gripe. One of my most particular friends; I had him arrested last night. Bills dishonoured—times hard. It hurt my tender feelings; but business must be done in due form.

Tim. You have an excellent heart!

Gripe. Your master is out, I suppose?

Tim. Very much so, for he reckoned on your forgetting to call to-day.

Gripe. It's very odd I never find him at home but when I have to bring him some cash.

Tim. The fact is, that he is gone to look for money.

Gripe. Is he? that's right; I always had a particular friendship for your master.

Tim. I hope you won't treat him like your other particular friend. Well, he's gone for the money; but then they charge such shameful interest.

Gripe. They do: sad rogues these money-lenders; not content with a little, like me; twenty per cent. or so, just to be doing with. For my part, I can't call my money my own; I take it to belong to the public.

Tim. And sometimes you take the money of the public to belong to you. [Aside.]

Gripe. What! Well, I mustn't be trifled with; I shall make your master find money, depend on that.

Tim. Shall you, sir? I'm sure we shall be very much obliged to you, and you shall be the first to profit by the discovery.

Gripe. I'll wait no longer.

Tim. Well but, Mr. *Gripe*, we've still a resource; we've a rich father in London.

Gripe. I know it.

Tim. From whom we expect a large remittance, and permission for my master to marry a rich widow, the lady Emily.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A letter for Mr. Dunsford.

Tim. Give it me. [Exit Servant] Postmark, London, hand-writing dad's, and——

Gripe. The letter doesn't look very thick; I doubt the remittance——

Tim. [Holds up the Letter] Don't you see the watermark? Oh, bank-paper's thin; it may contain a million.

Re-enter CHARLES DUNSFORD, running.

Charles. I can't bear suspense; give me the letter.

Gripe. Oh, you're at home, sir; I hope you'll find your expectations realized, for I'm tired of being your creditor.

Charles. Not more than I am of being your debtor, believe me.

Gripe. Dear, how I do long for the contents of that letter.

Charles. You shall hear. [Reuds] You promise marriage and reformation; but you've promised too often for me to believe you.——

Gripe. That's a sad hit at your morals, young gentleman, and rather hard to digest.

Charles. [*Reads*] *You're no longer my son, and I abandon you to the extortions of an avaricious old scoundrel, who eats you up alive—Very hard to digest indeed, Mr. Gripe.*

Tim. And a sad hit at your morals, old gentleman. Indeed, sir, our father paints striking likenesses.

Charles. [*Reads*] *I abandon you to the tricks, falsehood, cheating, dexterity, and deception of a rascally valet.*

Gripe. Very striking likenesses indeed. But, sir, your father shall pay for these incivilities in the person of his son.

Tim. Nay, don't be ill-natured; as the old gentleman, when speaking of me, talks about cleverness and dexterity, I can forgive him his abuse of you.

Charles. My hopes are over.

Gripe. And as you're likely to get no consent to your marriage, and I am not likely to get my money—

Fanny. [*Speaks without*] This way, my lady.

Tim. Hold! don't go: take my counsel: you [*To Charles Dunsford*] shall get the lady; you [*To Gripe*] your money.

Gripe. How?

Charles. Impossible!

Tim. My lady's mercury is coming up; don't contradict me, sir, and the day's our own; or suppose you step aside one moment, sir: depend entirely on me for once, and if the lady don't sign her consent to marry you this day—Oh, unexpected happiness.

Enter FANNY.

Dear sir! since your father has forgiven all, why do you not embrace him? Ah, sir, I see how it is; your son's feelings overcome him; allow him to retire.

[*Exit Charles.*]

Fanny. His father! then it really is! How sly of the old gentleman! I'll make my lady come up immediately.

[*Exit. During her Speech Timothy is in dumb show, persuading Gripe to second his design.*]

Gripe. Me pass for his father! I can't do it; I never was any body's father in my life.

Tim. Then you'll lose every shilling of your money.

Gripe. But do you think he'll call a stranger his daddy?

Tim. It's what three-fourths of the world do every day.

Gripe. Seventeen hundred and thirty-two pounds, eleven—

Tim. Hush! here's the lady.

Re-enter FANNY, with LADY EMILY.

Madam, I was just coming with my old master's respects to inform you—

Fanny. Your old master has been kind enough to inform my lady of his arrival himself.

Lady E. I had the honour, sir, to receive your letter, and concluded that you did not mean to see your son till—

Tim. No, my lady, my old master did not mean to—
—Say you didn't mean to— [Apart to *Gripe.*

Gripe. I didn't mean, my lady, to go without being paid till I heard—

Lady E. To go without being paid, sir?

Tim. My old master is a little deaf, my lady; and he has been put out of his way by meeting rather unexpectedly an old rogue of the name of *Gripe*; who wanted to swindle my young master out of—

Gripe. Hold your tongue, sirrah, that Mr. *Gripe* is a gentleman I've a very great regard for; but all these matters are to be settled when your ladyship gives the young man your hand.

Lady E. To which you, sir, have no objection?

Gripe. None in the world; the sooner the better; and then I hope my young gentleman will pay me.

Lady E. Pay you?

Fanny. Pay him?

Tim. Hold your tongue, *Fanny*. Yes, my lady, pay him—in—in—duty and affection.

Lady E. And where is he? Here have I been ten minutes in the room, and he has never once made his appearance.

Re-enter CHARLES DUNSFORD.

Well, Charles, what have you got to say? Are you afraid to speak? What's the matter? Can't you speak? Won't you speak?

Charles. Lady Emily, whatever your opinion of me may be——

Lady E. My opinion of you certainly was very bad; but as you seem a little confused, and that gentleman is willing to forgive you every thing, why so must I too.

Charles. He forgive me!

Gripe. Oh no, not while I can reckon 1732.

Fanny. What does he say, my lady?

Tim. Oh, that's his age.

Lady E. His age 1732?

Tim. No; that's the year he was born in.—You'll lose every shilling if you don't take care.

[Apart to Gripe.]

Gripe. Well, then, if your ladyship consents——

Charles. If she consents! is there a hope then?

Lady E. To be sure you may hope.

Tim. I told you I'd do it for you, sir.

[Apart to Charles.]

Charles. And when—when, my dearest Emily?

Lady E. Oh, let your father do me the honour of a visit, and then you shall arrange every thing your own way.

Charles. Emily, this is cruel; you well know my father——

Lady E. What's cruel? Is he mad?

Tim. With joy, madam.—Your coming spoils all.

[Apart to Charles] The lady don't like to speak before company; do let me prevail on you to stay one moment; the lady will make you happy, and the old gentleman will forgive you.

Gripe. If I do I'll be d——n'd.

Lady E. Positively I'll hear no more apologies. Farewell, sir. Now, don't stir, I beg; you must be vastly fatigued with your journey.

[To Gripe:]

Gripe. Oh, not at all, madam, I'm used to it; I've had so many journeys here that——

Lady E. Sir!

Tim. My old master means in his younger days, my lady; he has been a great walker; he'd have walked till now if he had not been stopped.

Lady E. Bring your son with you. I am glad he feels for past errors; and accept his promises for the future, because I know his honour, and am certain he is incapable of deceiving me.

[*Exeunt Lady Emily and Fanny.*]

Tim. All's right. Now I'll go and persuade my master to be married without asking any further questions; you follow the widow, get her to sign her consent, and your money and my wages will be safe.

Gripe. Poor young man, he must come into our scheme; wedlock or a warrant, a bailiff or a bride.

Tim. But hard as the choice may appear, if it was my case, I do think gallantry would induce me to decline the law in favour of the lady. [Exit.

Gripe. And I am willing to decline both, and give up every thing except my money. [Exit,

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I. A Hall at LADY EMILY'S.

Enter DUNSFORD and JACOB; the latter with a parcel of Bills in his Hand.

Duns. Then her ladyship is gone out, is she, Jacob?

Jacob. So the lady below do say, your worship; but they do look for her in every minute.

Duns. And my son wasn't at home, eh?

Jacob. That he warn't, I'm sartain sure, for I heard a man say so at his door, to a dozen fine gentlemen, who came for money, and said master Charles were a swindler; so I fired up, and bid 'em be cool, and said your worship were no swindler's father, and that you were come here to pay 'em all; so they followed I here with their long bills foremost, like so many geese after a gander.

Duns. The devil they did.

Jacob. To be sure they did; and moreover I said I were sure your worship wouldn't pay one till you had look'd 'em all over; and then they said, that as your

son Charles did run in debt like a gentleman; they didn't doubt but the old boy, his father, would pay 'em.

Duns. [*Takes the Bills*] What have we here? [*Reads the Heads of each Paper*] Water-proof great-coats—Wine—Copper-bottom boots—Tavern dinners—Shooting ponies—Money lent—Two fowling-pieces—A brace of pointers—Three blood mares—Saddles, bridles, tandem, harness, and a tilbury.

Jacob. Then there be notes o'hand, and little scraps o'paper wi' I O U scrawl'd on 'em.

Duns. And did you tell all these people to wait?

Jacob. Yes, sir; but they said they'd wait no longer, but would step to the coffee-house just by, and if your worship didn't pay 'em in less than an hour, they'd send lawyer folk for special 'riginals with fiery faces.

Duns. Pshaw! they shall take half what's here with them; tandems, and tilburies, and trumpery. If tradesmen were less fond of unfair speculation, and would leave off giving credit for damaged superfluities at double price to minors, who are tempted beyond their means, ready money would come oftener to market; lawyers would want work, and gazettes appear without a bankrupt list. Ah!—*Jacob, Jacob*, what were my youthful expenses compared to these?

Jacob. Little enough. When I tended your honour at college—

Duns. Did I ever lay out an idle guinea?

Jacob. Not many.

Duns. [*Looking at the Bills*] Then here's Champagne. Did I ever give a bank-note for a bottle of wine?

Jacob. No; bank-notes were worth ten pounds a piece then.

Duns. Did I let an idle rascal of a valet pick my pocket, under a pretence of assisting my pleasures?

Jacob. As to picking your pocket, that was impossible; and I never see'd any thing like pleasure in all your service.

Duns. In short, what one single extravagance was I guilty of?

Jacob. Except paying the hush-money to Betsy Ogle, the Irish bachelor's bed-maker——

Duns. Hold your tongue, you rascal! Here are ladies!

Jacob. It be lady Emily, and I should think the other were her maid, only she don't look at all like one. She be as smart as she be ill-natured; fine and cross, I warrant me.

Duns. Jacob, go you down that way. I'll stop here and watch her a little, before I introduce myself. It's as well to know what sort of a daughter-in-law she's like to be. Go, Jacob, go.

[Retires at the middle Door.]

Jacob. A nice wench that, faith. How ladies maids are improved since my young days! A gentleman's man ought to be as good as a lady's woman! and yet if I were married to so fine a wife as she, my hand would go up to my hat every time I opened my lips to her.

[Exit.]

Enter LADY EMILY and FANNY.

Lady E. Fanny, what are you thinking of? You never spoke a single word while we were at Mr. Dunsford's, nor all the way home. Silence in you is so like a calm before a storm, it rather alarms me.

Fanny. I was ruminating, madam, on the very extraordinary conduct of young Mr. Dunsford.

Duns. Oh, ho! That's my son. *[Aside.]*

Lady E. And I was thinking what a very disagreeable, I was going to say, brute he has got for a father.

Duns. That's me! *[Aside.]*

Fanny. With his large ugly eyes glaring on his ruby snub nose, like two gas-lights on a red reflector.

Lady E. Not at all what I expected from his letter.

Duns. Why the letter said nothing of my nose or my eyes either. *[Aside.]*

Fanny. Then to behave in such a way, to come down so unexpectedly. In short his conduct is as ridiculous as his person.

Lady E. And that is certainly not calculated to make any very favourable impression.

Fanny. Such an awkward air!

Lady E. Insignificant figure.

Fanny. So much of the—what your ladyship calls canaille.

Lady E. And so little of the gentleman.

Duns. [*Who has been advancing by degrees*] Vastly well, ladies; I hope the picture is complete. I am at a loss, however, to guess how poor old Mrs Dunsford has been so fortunate as to merit a portrait so extremely flattering.

Lady E. And I, sir, am still more at a loss to imagine why you should take the liberty of listening to our conversation.

Duns. The cause, madam, is both simple and natural. I heard you speak of Mr. Dunsford, senior.

Lady E. Well, sir!

Duns. Well, madam, I am that gentleman.

Lady E. You! Why, Fanny, can you guess the meaning of this?

Fanny. Me? Oh, no, madam, I am as ignorant as you are; I'm quite in the dark.

Duns. Can't my two gas-lights illuminate you? or has the little snub reflector lost its brilliancy?

Lady E. Sir, your attempt at imposition is ill-timed, for old Mr. Dunsford has just parted with us.

Fanny. And he is a very different sort of person from you, I assure ye, sir.

Duns. I'm happy to hear that, however: perhaps you have been imposed on. Pray, madam, who has had the audacity to assume my name?

Fanny. 'Eood, but I am almost inclined to believe that you are Mr. Dunsford.

Duns. I'm very much obliged to you, Mrs. Chatter-box.

Fanny. I'll be hanged if I didn't suspect some trick!

Duns. Here, madam, is a letter from my son; you know his hand.

Lady E. Yes, sir—'tis his—and you—may I look further? I thought I saw my name.

Duns. [*Giving her the Letter*] Certainly. It is mentioned with all the ardour of a romantic lover; he asked my consent to marry you: aware of his past indiscretions, I wrote him a severe answer, which I myself followed with the intention of observing its effect, and assuring myself at least of the merit of the lady for whom he professed so sincere a passion!

Fanny. Lord, what a nice old gentleman.

Lady E. The caution of the father, will at least be a counterpoise to the levities of the son.

Duns. And can you give me any clue to discover who honoured me so far as to be my duplicate?

Fanny. Some low-bred acquaintance of Mr. Charles's man, Timothy, I dare say, sir.

Lady E. Or, from some significant words that escaped him about payment, I should almost fancy one of his creditors.

Duns. One of the seven sets who are appointed for each day in the week, I suppose. Charles deserves a reproof, and I feel inclined to give him a severe one.

Lady E. By what right, sir; you are no longer his father: you are discarded.

Duns. 'Egad, that's very true, I'm out of office.

Fanny. I know what I would do to be even with them, sir. Your son has given himself a father to ensure his marriage; suppose my lady were to give herself one to break it off?

Lady E. But I don't want to break it off.

Fanny. Only for a joke, my lady, and to bite the biter.

Duns. I understand. But my son will certainly recognise his own father.

Fanny. Then he must be a wise one at least. But here comes your substitute, the supposed papa, without him; and pray, sir, see if my description doesn't do justice to the original. [*Old Dunsford retires a little.*]

Enter GRIPE.

Gripe. I wait on you, charming lady Emily, accord-

ing to my promise, to calm your fond impatience; and have briefly drawn up this little sketch of a deed, which, knowing my regard for you, and the interests of my son, you needn't take the trouble to inspect. The name alone is wanting—only sign—and hymen's joys, and cupid's darts, and—you needn't read it.

Duns. No. I'll do that. [*Snatching the Paper.*]

Gripe. Eh? Who the devil's this?—Your most obedient, sir. I didn't see that any body—My daughter-in-law's lawyer, I dare say. He'll find me out unless I tip; I'll touch him handsomely, and Charles shall pay it. [*Aside. Dunsford tears the Paper*] Hey-day, sir! by what authority do you destroy that paper?

Duns. By the right which a father has to protect the interests of his child.

Gripe. Is that lady your daughter?

Duns. As much, sir, as you are the father of Mr. Dunsford.

Gripe. That may easily be, and not very nearly related either. What a damn'd unlucky arrival! [*Aside.*]

Lady E. My father arrived rather unexpectedly from the West Indies, sir.

Gripe. Bless me! how long since?

Duns. Just at the moment you came so unexpectedly from London.

Fanny. Yes, sir, he got out of his carriage about the same time they were taking the horses off from yours.

Gripe. And pray, sir, for what reason do you break off this marriage?

Duns. Is it possible you can be ignorant of your son's conduct? that he has plunged into every species of dissipation, and that he has contracted debts he never means to pay?

Gripe. I hope not. I know he has contracted debts; I have 1732 reason to know it.

Duns. Then he has got into the hands of avaricious money-lenders.

Gripe. People must pay for accommodation.

Duns. Among them is one Gripe, I think they call him, as great a rascal as ever escaped the pillory.

Gripe. Sir!

Duns. The most unblushing extortioner.

Gripe. Sir!

Lady E. 'Tis the man himself! [*Apart to Fanny.*

Fanny. One may see that with half an eye, my lady.

[*Aside.*

Duns. But I am to blame: I see the delicacy of your feelings; I see what they suffer by this detail.

Gripe. Yes; my delicacy does suffer: I can't say much for yours. [*Aside.*

Duns. Yet Charles is not worth the pains you have taken.

Gripe. I'm afraid not.

Duns. He has never kept his word with you.

Gripe. I'll be damn'd if he has.

Duns. But has placed you at this moment in a very, I may say, very awkward situation.

Gripe. Very.

Duns. In which you look uncommonly ridiculous. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady E. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Fanny. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Gripe. Ha, ha! Cursed ridiculous indeed! I feel it. But if the lady and I forgive him, all this need not prevent the marriage. We were all young once; and you, my lady, who so firmly promised——

Lady E. Am luckily preserved by my father's arrival from a fatal error.

Duns. Farewell, sir. Charles can never be my son-in-law.

Lady E. Nor shall you, sir, ever be my father-in-law.

Fanny. Nor shall ever be my master.

Duns. Tell him he has lost a lovely, rich, and deserving wife, and incurred the severe anger of an affectionate father. I'm sorry for you, sir, and yet you'll excuse me, but I can't help laughing; ha, ha, ha!

Lady E. I am as sorry as he is; ha, ha, ha!

Fanny. We are all very sorry, very sorry indeed, Mr. Thingumbob; but we can't help laughing; ha, ha, ha!

[Exeunt all but Gripe, laughing.]

Gripe. Mighty civil upon my word; but I deserve to be laughed at. This comes of owning other people's children. What could I expect less? A plague of my tenderness of heart! 'Twill be your ruin, old Gripe, 'twill be your ruin! You must lend your money forsooth to young men of family, who repay the capital in promises, and the interest with ha, ha, ha!

Enter CHARLES DUNSFORD and TIMOTHY.

Charles. Well, sir, since I am assured the widow is willing, I have found the lawyer, and the contract is drawn up.

Gripe. Then you may fold it up neatly, and put it in the fire.

Charles. How so?

Gripe. The widow won't have you.

Charles. No! Why, has she changed her mind?

Gripe. No; her father is arrived.

Tim. Her father?

Charles. Her father? I never heard of him.

Gripe. But he has heard of you, and seems to be very well acquainted with you; for he says that you are dissipated, thoughtless, extravagant, and not likely to pay me a farthing of the seventeen hundred and thirty-two good pounds you owe me.

Tim. You're troublesome. It's plain the two old gentlemen are in one story.

Charles. Yet I always understood lady Emily to be an orphan?

Tim. This father must be an impostor; and it's a great shame. They ought to blush to practice such a piece of deception.

Charles. Were she capable of it, it would be a drawback on my happiness for ever.

Gripe. Happiness or no happiness, you must marry her.

Charles. How, sir?

Gripe. My debt depends on the marriage for payment.

Charles. You have played some tricks between you, and perhaps disgraced me.—Reveal it, scoundrel, or—
[Seizes Timothy.]

Tim. Here's gratitude! Is it thus you repay my efforts for your service? Is it thus I am rewarded for an attachment so sincere, that if you did not owe me seven quarters, six weeks, and three days wages, down to last Monday se'nnight was Michaelmas-day, old style, may I never see Fanny again, if I wouldn't do myself the honour of giving you a moment's warning, and resign a month's pay with pleasure, to escape from so unkind a master.

Re-enter LADY EMILY.

Lady E. Hey-day, gentlemen, will you have the goodness to recollect that you are not at home.

Charles. [Rises and comes forward] Emily! explain this change of mind. You cannot conceive what these caprices cost me.

Lady E. Every thing always costs you more than other people. If you will be extravagant, who can help it? But don't look so grave; I suppose you have heard that a certain person's father is arrived?

Charles. Did you expect him?

Lady E. As much as you did yours.

Charles. 'Tis odd too. It couldn't have happened more apropos, if it had been arranged purposely. It almost tempts one to believe that this is a mere *finesse*, to provide a plea for the rejection of my love.

Lady E. You cannot for a moment think I would descend to impose a stranger on you, and take advantage of a generous, unsuspecting man.

[*Charles walks up the Stage; Lady Emily follows him.*]

Tim. I'll get that all by heart, on purpose to say to Fanny, the first time I quarrel with her.

Gripe. She loves him—and things look better by twenty per cent.

[Lady Emily and Charles come forward.

Lady E. Nay, don't take it so serious; remember "Suspicion only haunts the guilty mind."—Hark!

[A Knocking.

Tim. "The thief does fear each bush an officer."

[Exit.

Charles. Emily, may I, or may I not, hope to obtain your hand?

Lady E. You may, if father consents. You shall see him. You'll like him prodigiously.

Charles. This indifference kills me! and I take my leave.

Gripe. [Stops him] Not till I'm paid. [Apart.

Re-enter TIMOTHY.

Tim. No, sir, you mustn't go yet; they're all at the door.

Charles. Who?

Tim. All your creditors. Monday and Tuesday are tolerably reasonable, Wednesday and Thursday quite outrageous, while Friday and Saturday threaten measures, from which nothing but Sunday can save you.

Charles. How came they here?

[Goes up the Stage, and sits down at the Back.

Tim. They say they were sent for by your father.

Lady E. How kind of you, sir, to interpose in your son's behalf.

Gripe. Me! I didn't promise to pay his debts.

Lady E. You wouldn't suffer him to go to prison?

Gripe. He may go to the devil, if he likes.

Tim. An only son!—Do not betray yourself. [Apart to Gripe] What, sir, will you not listen to the voice of nature?

Gripe. I'll listen to nothing.

Re-enter FANNY, conducting a Host of Creditors.

Fanny. This way, gentlemen; Mr. Dunsford's father is here. Pray take the trouble to walk in.

Tim. What an officious little devil?

1 Cred. This doubtless is the respectable gentleman.

[*To Gripe.*

Gripe. I'm no such thing ; I've no respectability about me.

2 Cred. Only two ponies.

[*Presents a Bill.*

3 Cred. A brace of pointers.

4 Cred. Harness for a tandem.

5 Cred. A tilbury.

6 Cred. And a telegraph.

[*They follow him round the Stage.*

Gripe. The devil tandem, tilbury, and telegraph you altogether.

Tim. And take old Gripe into the bargain.

1 Cred. Why, didn't you send for all our accounts?

Re-enter DUNSFORD.

Duns. No, gentlemen, 'twas I.

Charles. Whom do I behold?

[*Lady Emily goes with Charles through the middle Door, and seems to be explaining to him ; Fanny does the same by Timothy.*

Duns. Fearful you may not have brought money sufficient to pay for the follies of your son, I have made up my mind to advance it for you.

[*To Gripe.*

Gripe. I don't want money advanced.

Duns. You can return it in three, six, or nine months. I shan't charge you more than twenty per cent.—And now, gentlemen, go down stairs, and I'll order my servant to settle with you immediately.

[*Exit Creditors.*

Gripe. Here's my demand.

[*Feels in his Pocket.*

Duns. I hope you'll sign an acknowledgment for the sum I have advanced?

Gripe. I'll sign a receipt when you pay my claim ; which—Why, where the devil—[*Feels in his Pocket*] Oh!—oh Lord!—I—I wrote the marriage obligation on the back, binding that lady to pay the within-named sum, or sums, and—

Duns. And I tore it all to pieces.—But don't look so angry : your son's debts are paid, and I'll make you a

present of the amount as a marriage portion for my daughter.

Gripe. I have no son. I care nothing for your daughter, and I will have my money.

Lady E. [*Comes forward*] But Mr. Dunsford—
[*To Gripe.*

Gripe. I am no Mr. Dunsford.

Duns. Then who the devil are you?

Gripe. I am that poor, ill-used, honest Mr. Gripe.

Duns. Who lends money at twenty per cent. inveigles young heirs, cheats guardians, and personates honest men. Oh, no, you never can be such a rascal as that.

Gripe. Yes, yes, I am, I tell you.

Duns. You wouldn't pretend to be the creditor of your own son?

Gripe. 'Twas that rascal, Timothy, gave me to him for a father; but since you are here to pay what's owing, I beg to resume my creditorship, and leave the relationship to whoever likes it.

Duns. 'Then I, sir, who am his father, advise you to write out your claim at a fair per centage. "Take thou no more nor less than a just" five per cent.; or if you do, recollect your present attempt at imposition, your former extortions, and tremble at the vengeance of an English jury.

Gripe. We'll try that.—And do you remember that while there are such cursed fools in the world as to offer twenty per cent. they'll always find wise men who are willing to take it.
[*Erit.*

Duns. And now, prodigal! [*To Charles.*

Charles. And now, rascal, confess upon your knees that I had no share in this villanous deception!
[*To Timothy.*

Tim. I'll confess whatever you please; and you know I always speak the truth.

Fanny. Indeed! why then the lady did come to you.

Charles. That lady was a sheriff's officer: there I

plead guilty: but with respect to this finesse of my servant, I pledge my honour——

Duns. You've already pledged that to your creditors.

Charles. With respect to whom lady Emily has informed me, sir, of your kind intentions: and when I forsake the path in which your goodness has replaced me, may I again be obliged to seek relief at TWENTY PER CENT.
[*Exeunt.*]

THE
TOBACCONIST.
A Farce.

ALTERED FROM BEN JONSON,
BY FRANCIS GENTLEMAN.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY
THOMAS DIBDIN,
OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE;
Author of several Dramatic Pieces, &c.



Printed at the Chiswick Press,
BY C. WHITTINGHAM;
FOR WHITTINGHAM AND ARLISS, PATERNOSTER
ROW, LONDON.

1815.



THE TOBACCONIST

Is an alteration, by Mr. Gentleman, from Ben Jonson's celebrated comedy of the *ALCHYMIST*, with intent "to give Mr. Weston's established merit, in the character of *Abel Drugger*, more frequent, familiar, and compact opportunity of showing itself than the old play afforded."

In the present day the unexampled popularity which Mr. Kean has attained to in so short a period has given a new celebrity to this almost obsolete farce; the present copy of which is much abridged from Mr. Gentleman's copy, and *litera-tim* as acted at Drury Lane Theatre.

With the exception of part of the character of *Abel Drugger*, very little of Ben Jonson's play is to be traced in this piece.



PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY MR. GENTLEMAN.

BEN Jonson's name, in ev'ry ear of taste,
Must with respect and countenance be grac'd ;
No pen the lines of nature better drew,
No wit or satire ever higher flew ;
An early pillar of the English stage,
His pieces were true pictures of the age ;
Time-worn they feel impair—yet still must please ;
Nervous and just, though void of modern ease.

Fashions, in characters as well as clothes,
Change, though less oft, as wav'ring fancy flows ;
Witches and fairies with their midnight train,
No longer revel on the blasted plain ;
Now ev'ry simpleton of Britain's isle,
At such a fraud as *alchemy* would smile ;
Yet being only chang'd in name and shapes,
Scarce one in ten the gilded bait escapes.

Haste to the hall where law is sold like ware,
How many long-rob'd alchymists ply there ;
What hopes to gudgeon clients they unfold,
While empty quibbles turn to solid gold ;
See swarming quacks ! (so public folly wills)
Convert to gold their health-destroying pills ;
Change-alley view—that scene of transmutation,
That base alchymic bubble of the nation ;
See beauty's self resign its brightest charms,
And turn to gold in age's frozen arms.

Search all the world, examine ev'ry part,
You'll find each man an alchymist at heart.
In ev'ry clime we find, if truth be told,
The universal deity is gold.

Whate'er of merit you perceive this night,
Grant your old bard as his undoubted right :
My brain has labour'd—feebly, I confess,
Only to furnish a more modern dress.
My weak endeavours let your candour raise,
'They hope indulgence, though they reach not praise.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted. Drury Lane, 1815.

<i>Abel Drugger</i> . .	Mr. Weston.	Mr. Kean.
<i>Subtle</i>	Mr. Gardner.	Mr. Gattie.
<i>Face</i>	Mr. Robson.	Mr. Wallack.
<i>Sir Epicure Mam-</i> <i>mon</i>	} Mr. Gentleman.	Mr. Hughes.
<i>Knowlife</i>		
<i>Headlong</i>	Mr. Fearon.	Mr. Barnard.
	Mr. Vandermere.	Mr. Oxberry.
<i>Miss Rantipole</i> . .	Mrs. Didier.	Miss Boyce.
<i>Doll Tricky</i> . . .	Mrs. Gardner.	Mrs. Harlowe.

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I.

Enter SUBTLE, *followed by* FACE.

Sub. **N**AY, nay, though thy name be Face, and thou hadst a face of brass, thou shalt not out-face me.

Face. Then must I be unable to handle a most excellent subject; though shame and thee have long since parted, I will so anatomize that calf's head of thine——

Sub. Calf's head! Blood of my life, I have a mind to mark my resentment in such legible characters upon that Tyburn visage of thine, as will put thy features in mourning.

Face. Come on then, see whose stomach will bear bruising best; I'll tickle those pampered sides.

Sub. A poor, ignorant, impertinent, ungrateful wretch; whose life, to my disgrace be it spoken, I have saved—vile emblem of an empty cask, much sound, no contents—canst thou forget the mouldy crusts, Suffolk cheese, and dead small beer, on which

thou wert starving, in common with bare-ribbed rats and limping mice?

Face. Mighty well, mighty well, master Subtle.

Sub. Have I not made thee an occasional captain? am I not filling thy pockets as well as thy belly? have I not taught thee, dull as thou art, to converse with and impose on various degrees of mankind? have I not, from the stupidest slave that ever marred common sense, sharpened thy wit, smoothed thy tongue, polished thy manners, regulated thy features, to make thee capable of thriving in life, and this treatment my hopeful recompense?

Face. Not so fast, not so fast, master Glib-tongue; give echo fair play, or I can bring a powerful balance on my side, to silence your modest worship.

Sub. With contempt I defy thee.

Face. My tongue shall so buffet thee, that thou shalt think half Billingsgate, the seat of thy education, let loose about thy ears, and shrink back that knave's face of thine like a snail into its shell.

Sub. Mighty fine!

Face. Remember St. Giles's, scape-grace, where I found thee a complete emblem of poverty, resembling the fruit of a gibbet seven years exposed to wind and weather, not a coat to thy back, a stocking to thy legs, nor a shoe to thy feet.

Sub. Very well; go on, sir.

Face. Did I not find thee, tatterdemalion, with a beard two inches long, not having wherewithal to pay a penny barber; furrowed brows, sunk eyes, and chattering teeth, crawling by the doors of cook-shops, to feed upon the steam of baked ox-heads and shins of beef?

Sub. Tremble, audacious villain, at thy insolence—fear my rage.

Face. Did I not put thee into some liking, snatch thee from Jane Shore's fate, and when thou hadst not as much linen about thee as would furnish a tinder-box, did I not, like a guardian genius, bring thee to this house?

Sub. Yes, thy master's house; which, like a hungry mastiff, thou wast left to guard, and for a single bone would have let in any thief.

Face. Did I not enable thee to carry on the deceptions of alchymy, fortune-telling, and algebra; your minerals, your vegetals, and animals, to fleece the credulous vulgar? have not I provided you with conjurer's robes, stills, glasses, furnaces, coals, and all other materials, to carry on thy profitable farce? Answer me, knave, have I not done all this?

Sub. And answer me, miscreant, hast thou not thy share of the plunder? Sirrah, thou art as craving and unthankful as a bumbailiff.

Face. And thou, poltroon, as tricking as a Jewish stock-broker, or an Old Bailey solicitor.

Enter TRICKSY.

Trick. How now, my masters? What tantrums are these, I trow? Why ye look as black at each other as a dark Christmas.

Sub. The dog is more hateful to me than cheese.

Face. And thou to me more detestable than the fulsome steam of a tallow-chandler's workshop.

Trick. For shame, talk not so loud, you will discover yourselves.

Face. I care not; welcome pillory or cart, so that varlet has his share.

Sub. Content, so thou art cropped or hanged first.

Trick. Hey-day, hey-day, if you are for that sport have among ye; I must raise my voice too, then look to it; why, you couple of paltry, petulant knaves, can't we comfortably share gains, and be quiet?

Face. Why it is all his fault, Doll.

Sub. I deny it.

Trick. 'Tis both your faults, you tinder-temper'd knaves; you sputter at one another, and yet have as little courage as honesty; I know your high words and big looks; you spend your lungs to bawl, and strain your limbs to stride, without any meaning.

Sub. Take breath, Doll—take breath.

Trick. Take breath! Ads my life, shake hands, live peaceably, and cheat industriously, or tremble at my vengeance; I'll expose ye—get a genteel reward for apprehending such notorious rogues.

Sub. Nay but, dear Doll—Doll, the soft—Doll, the gentle.

Trick. No wheedling, Mr. Morose, but swear.

Sub. What wouldst thou have me swear?

Trick. To leave idle disputation and high words for industry in promoting our common cause, this will best become you.

Sub. By my hopes, I meant no other; what I said was only to spur him up a little.

Trick. Come, come, no more; we want no whipping nor spurring; take hands—no frowns, but cordiality; I proclaim a peace.

Sub. Which for thy sake, fair mediatrix, I will keep religiously.

Face. And I.

Trick. I'll have no Frenchified professions, fair faces, with designing hearts—for my sake! keep the compact for your own.

Face. Wench of spirit, we will; and, as a reward for thy pains, thou shalt be lady Face, or lady Subtle.

Trick. Marry, come up, I trow—a wonderful catch—suppose I should be neither, but of that hereafter—is it not near the hour when that prince of simplicity, my sweet swain, the tobaccoist, is to be here?

Sub. It is. *Face*, be thou in the way, to meet and conduct him to an audience.

Face. Fear not; I'll play the gudgeon with an angler's skill.

[*Exit.*

Sub. Why, Doll, thou hast almost as many admirers as Helen.

Trick. Admirers! if the frames were not gilded, the pictures would be intolerable; as for instance, Abel Druggier, whose formality of phiz, and shallowness of scull, might for a few visits make even melancholy

smile; then that cumbersome repository of ill thoughts, sir Epicure, who batters my ears with such pomposity of phrase, that I should always have a dictionary at hand to understand him; he is, for mouthing, the puff'd-up crier of Cupid's court.

Sub. He is indeed a rich subject for imposition.—Good wench, thou art to us as a conjurer's show-cloth, to draw in the gaping crowd; most of the sheep are penned by thee, and we fleece them.

Trick. Yes, that you do pretty handsomely—but of all my numerous gallants, I am most troubled with Headlong, the betting, boxing blade; and often fancy I stand in danger of feeling personally, by way of joke, the dexterity of his fists.

Sub. Hush! I hear somebody coming—retire till occasion demands thy presence; and above all, remember the feigned madness I have taught thee for thy next interview with sir Epicure—much depends on that.

Trick. Fear not—he shall think me fresh slipped from the region of Moorfields. [Exit.]

Sub. Now for suitable importance of look, and essential obscurity of phrase; by which the prudent are sometimes, and the foolish are always taken in.

Re-enter FACE, with ABEL DRUGGER.

Face. There he is—the wonder of the world—past, present, and to come, are as familiar to him as thou art with thy own face; there's not a fixed planet, nor even a wandering star, beyond his knowledge.

[Apart to Face.]

Drug. Mayhap so—then he must have a power of acquaintances—I should not remember half of them.

[Apart.]

Face. You!—comparisons are—but mum—he turns upon us.

[Apart.]

Sub. So, friend, thy name is Abel Drugger.

Drug. Yes, sir.

Sub. And thou art a vender of tobacco.

Drug. True, sir.

Sub. Free of the grocers.

Drug. Ay, an it please you.

Sub. Thou art lucky—a good star reigned at thy birth.

Face. Mind that, little Nab.

[*Apart.*

Drug. I hope it was a north star—they say that's luckiest now.

Sub. Thou hast an illustrious set of features.

Drug. Yes, very lustrous—mother used to call me her bright baby Abel.

Sub. Well—now for business—what wouldst thou have with me?

Drug. This, an please your wise worship—I am a young beginner, and am building a new shop, if it likes your reverence—it is just at the corner of a street—here's the plot on't; and I would know, by art, sir, of your venerablenesship, which way I should make my door by necromany, and where to place my boxes, where my shelves, and where my pots—I should be glad to thrive—I was wished to you by captain Face here, my very good friend, who says that you know men's planets, and their good angels and their bad.

Sub. He tells you a most solemn truth: I do know them.

Drug. I pray you, captain, speak for me to master Doctor; his wisdom hath taken both my courage and breath away.

[*Apart.*

Face. Well, well, I'll be thy spokesman. [*Apart*] Doctor, this is my friend; his name is Abel—a very honest fellow.

Drug. Yes, very honest.

Face. And no goldsmith.

Drug. No, no goldsmith.

Sub. And, as I have already hinted, very fortunate—at which allow me to rejoice—soft—metaposcropy informs me that your chestnut, or olive-coloured hair, does never fail; besides, your long ears promise extremely well—you were born on a Wednesday.

Drug. Good now—by my truly, and so I was.

Face. Is not this astonishing?

[*Apart.*

Sub. The thumb in chiromancy we give to Venus, the fore finger to Jove, the midst to Saturn, the ring to Sol, the least to Mercury.

[*While Subtle is examining Druggers's Fingers, he steals off a Ring.*

Drug. Nay, and you give them all away, I shall have none for myself.

Face. Is not this strange?

[*Apart.*

Drug. Yes, truly, very strange. [*Missing his Ring.*

Sub. Now for attention—this is thy house.

Drug. Yes, sir.

Sub. And these are your two sides.

Drug. So they are indeed, sir.

Sub. Mark me then—make your door here in the south, your broad-side west, and to the east side of your shop write in fair golden letters these words, Mathlai, tarmael, baraborat.

Drug. Matlay, turnmill, boreabratt—what may that be in English, an like your wise worship?

Face. Mum there; plain English would ruin all.

[*Aside.*

Sub. Upon the north side inscribe Thael, velil, thiel.

Drug. Rael, velil, thiel.

Sub. Those are the names of such mercurial spirits as fright flies from boxes, cobwebs from shelves, and vermin from thy cupboards.

Drug. I pray you, sir, write down these charms, for I have but a sieve-like memory—all runs through.

Sub. Fear not; I'll strengthen thy recollection, and give thee, for I like thy countenance, such other assistance as will make thee stand a fair chance to possess that source of boundless riches, the philosopher's stone.

Face. Hearest thou that, little Nub?

[*Apart.*

Drug. Ay, I do, good captain—what must I give the doctor?

[*Apart.*

Face. Give him—consider thou art a made man—thou canst not possibly give less than—but hold, that you may try his wisdom a little closer, ask him about any

particular circumstance that happened some time since—see if he can tell.

Drug. I'll do't. [*Apart*] With your worship's good favour, I would ask what happened to me, last Martin-mass-day was twelvemonth, at night?

Sub. I see thou doubt'st my skill—but I'll indulge thee. Aries, Taurus, Virgo, Sagittarius, Capricornus, whisper in my ear the event I am questioned upon.

Drug. Are all these brother conjurer's he's talking to?

Sub. Thou never wast at a tavern in thy life but on the evening thou hast mentioned.

Drug. Truth, and no more I was not.

Sub. There you was so sick—

Drug. What, can you tell that too?—Ay, we had been out shooting water-wagtails, and I had gotten a rare stomach—so eating a piece of fat ram mutton for supper, it lay heavy on my stomach, and my head did so ache.—

Face. And Nab having no head——

Drug. No, no head.

Sub. You were obliged to be carried home, where a good old woman——

Drug. Yes, faith, she cured me with sodden ale and pellitory o'th' wall—it cost me but twopence.

Face. Wonderful cheap.

Drug. But I had another sickness, worse than the ram mutton.

Sub. That too I know; it was grief at being sessed eighteen-pence for the water-works.

Drug. As I am a true man, and so it was—ay, it had like to have cost me my life—'twas done in perfect spite.

Sub. Nay, thy very hair fell off.

Drug. Ay, and it has never curl'd since.—Every syllable true, as I stand here, captain Face—I'll give him a crown.

Face. What?

Drug. Yes, I'll give him a crown.

[*Apart.*

[*Apart.*

[*Apart.*

[*Apart.*

[*Apart.*

Face. A crown! I blush to think of it: what, after consulting so many stars, and obtaining such marks of good fortune, put the doctor off with a less fee than you must give for a pettifogging lawyer's letter—oh! shame, shame! what gold hast thou about thee?

[*Apart.*

Drug. A two guinea piece, which was left me by my grandmother; and I would fain leave it to my grandchild.

[*Apart.*

Face. Pshaw, pshaw—give it to the doctor—nay, pause not, man—and the next visit make it ten—is it not a cheap purchase of ten times ten millions?—Mind that, Nab.

[*Apart.*

Drug. Well, friend captain, since you desire it—but shan't I ask him for any change?

[*Apart.*

Face. Not for the world.

[*Apart.*

Drug. There then—so I thank your worship—I am your conjurership's humble servant—[*Going*]—I had almost forgot—I would desire another favour of his worship.

Sub. What is that, my knight of the steady phiz?

Drug. That your doctorship will be so kind, as to be so civil, to look over my almanac, and cross out my ill days; that I may neither buy, nor sell, nor trust, upon them.

Face. I promise this shall be done against the afternoon.

Sub. It shall—moreover, I will mark out a disposition of thy shelves, devise a sign, with other matters that may serve thee.

Face. Rejoice, Nab, thou art in high favour with the doctor.

Drug. I humbly thank your grace, and if your reverence comes near Pye-corner, you shall be welcome to some of my best Oroonoko, Virginia, long-cut, short-cut, saffron, shag, or—your conjurership's most humble servant.

[*Exit.*

Face. Ha, ha, ha! thus grist flows into our mill—what think you of this tame pigeon?

Sub. An excellent subject for imposition, and quite ripe for plucking; the stock is indebted to thee for bringing him to hand—at his next visit Doll shall ply him on another side, in the character of a rich widow—I must in and prepare myself for sir Epicure Mammou; do thou slip on the laboratory disguise, and watch his coming to the door.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I.

Enter SIR EPICURE MAMMON and FACE.

Sir E. Well, my Zephyrus, do we succeed? Is our day come? Blushes the bolt's head?

Face. Even with a virgin glow.

Sir E. Excellent; now then, Lungs, all my care must be where to get stuff enough for transmutation.

Face. Your worship must buy the metal covering from the roofs of churches.

Sir E. Thou say'st well; and instead thereof place thatch; thatch will sit lighter on their rafters. Well, after this day, all that art can frame, or luxury can desire, is mine; I'll have a seraglio, to put the grand signior's out of countenance; for where's that beauty can withstand a knight of gold?—my very slaves shall live on such viands as monarchs now call rarities; thy cares too, my Lungs, are near an end; this night I'll manumit thee from the furnace, and repair thy brain, hurt with fume o'th' metals.

Face. I thank you, sir; I have indeed blown hard for your worship.

Sir E. And thou shalt have reward; a ton of gold shall pay thee; the largest bell our island can afford I'll change into that glorious metal, so may'st thou ring thy noble fortune.—Where's thy master?

Face. Within, sir, at his prayers for the success of our great projection.

Sir E. Good soul, to pray so much, and toil so hard for my emolument. Thou, Lungs, when I have got thee into flesh a little, shalt be my kisser aga, the keeper of my wanton nymphs, more fair than those who tripped the Cyprian grove.

Face. Hold, sir, not a profane word—for see the pious doctor comes. [Exit.

Enter SUBTLE.

Sir E. Good morrow, father.

Sub. Gentle son, good morrow—but wherefore here so soon? I fear me you are covetous, and wish possession of the stone for carnal appetite; take heed you do not throw the near hand blessing from you with ungoverned haste; I should be sorry to see my labours, now on the point of perfection, not prosper where my honest love has placed them: as they have been meant for public good, for pious uses, and mere charity—shouldst thou pursue aught else, a curse will follow thy deceitful ways.

Sir E. I know it, venerable sir—you shall not need to fear me—I will be charity itself; there shall not be an empty stomach, or a thread-bare coat in the nation; I will build churches, endow hospitals, and make lean curates plump as fat metropolitans; I will give such premiums for virtue, that vice shall be ashamed to show its face; all arts, all sciences, shall thrive beneath my smile, and every comfort of life lie open to every hand; while temperance and doing good, to me, shall be the highest luxury.

Sub. Fairly spoken, if sincerity gives value to thy

words.—Ulen, look well to the register, and let your heat lessen by degrees to the aludels. [*To Face, within.*

Face. I shall, sir.

Sub. Look on, and bring word of what complexion is glass B. [*To Face*].—Son of my care, thy happiness approaches. [*To Sir Epicure*] How now, what colour says it? [*To Face.*

Re-enter FACE.

Face. The ground black, sir.

Sir E. That's your crow's head.

Sub. Be not too forward, son—the process then was right.

Face. Yes, by the token, sir; the retort broke, and what was saved was put into the pellicane, and sealed with Hermes' seal.

Sub. I think 'twas so; we should now have fresh amalgama; but I care not; let him e'en die.

Face. Our knight must have the other squeeze. [*Aside*] I would not you should let any die now, if I might counsel, sir, for luck's sake to the rest.

Sir E. Lungs, thou art right; now our harvest is at hand, why should it want the ripening?

Face. Nay, I know it, sir; I have seen the ill fortune;—what are some six ounces of fresh materials.

Sir E. What, no more? a very trifle—good sir, what shall I give him? [*Apart to Subtle.*

Sub. Some twenty pounds, or you may make it five-and-twenty.

Sir E. There is my purse with thirty; I shall have as many tons ere night.

Sub. Well snapped, gudgeon. [*Aside*] This needed not, but you will have it so—now must I set the oil of luna, and the philosopher's vinegar in kemia—Ulen, go thou for the amalgama—son, your leave awhile.

[*Erit.*

Sir E. Lungs, where's my lovely dame, my Cyprian queen; might I not, by thy good help, bask for a moment in the sunshine of her eye?—here's money for the pains thou tak'st to serve me. [*Gives Face Money.*

Face. I am your slave—I'll send her to your wish.

[*Exit.*

Sir E. Sure every smiling planet reigned at thy birth, sir Epicure, to mark thee out the eldest favourite of fortune—but she comes.

Enter TRICKSY.

Allow me, madam, to offer up my vows with rapture at the shrine of your charms.

Trick. The vows of men, sir Epicure, are false.

Sir E. Mine, fair dame, as true as alchymy, and rich as the philosopher's stone, which I am shortly to possess: suffer this ring to sparkle with added lustre upon that finger, whose delicate proportion not Phidias nor Praxiteles, were they alive again, with art sculptorian could describe.

Trick. Your praise and favour, sir, speak warmly to my heart.

Sir E. Soon shall they glow upon thee with the fervour of an Æthiopian sun; to-morrow will purchase the monarchy of this nether globe, and make thee, my second Venus, queen on't. Now let a touch of those soft lips confirm our contract.

Trick. Avaunt, ambassador of sin, and touch me not—emblem of vice, I've found thee.

Sir E. Found me; I didn't know that I was lost.

Trick. Thy eyes are blind, thy tongue licentious, thy limbs disordered.

Sir E. How she stares!

[*Aside.*

Trick. Thou walking volcano, thou embodied fever, go lay thee in the winter's frozen lap, and let him weep snow on thee, to allay thy raging heat.

Sir E. Mad as a March hare—would I were out of the house!

[*Aside.*

Trick. Thy cousins, Etna and Vesuvius, vomit not combustibles more destructive than are winged on thy infectious breath—come, if thou hast courage, I'll lead the way from off this sky-crown'd rock, and headlong plunge into yon roaring deep—thou tremblest—guilt

makes a coward of thee, and thou must remain a prey to self-consuming flames; while white-winged doves wait to bear me to the fields of bliss, where such as thou can never, never, never come.

Re-enter FACE.

Face. What's the matter? How did you work her to this?

Sir E. Nay I know not, Lungs, unless by asking a civil salute.

Face. Ah, there it is—knew you not her tender brain? once hurt by love and matchless modesty, dear good lady.

Sir E. Right, Lungs; coax her, Lungs.

Trick. Nay, shepherds, cease your melting strains, they are all in vain—I have no heart to give—'twas stolen long since—what, do you alter notes and looks so soon?—worse than the raven's discord—black as the brow of night; oh, you can quickly change—but I defy you all—for at my beck ten thousand spirits wait, to whom this nether globe, with all its load of sins, would be but a sportive toy, to bandy through unbounded regions of the trackless air.

Face. It is all over, we shall never lay her now; and, if the old man should hear her, we should be all undone—hark, was not that his footstep?—Move off, Doll.

[Aside.

Trick. The shade of Yarico has sent a card, and would attend my rout this night—will ye join this insubstantial meeting of visitants from the other world? Man of flesh, thou art too gross; throw off mortality, and take a frisk amongst us.

[Exit.

Sub. *[Within]* What profane noise is here?

Face. He comes.

[They go off.

Re-enter SUBTLE.

Sub. How! what sight doth wound my eyes? clouds and darkness, else why shun the light?—who's here, my son? *[Brings on Sir Epicure]* I have lived too long.

Sir E. Nay, good dear father, there was no dishonest purpose.

Sub. Nay, tell not me, I knew it ere I saw; our great work hath stood still these ten minutes, and all our lesser works gone back—this will retard our happy views a month at least, if not—

[*A loud Crack and Noise.*]

Sir E. Mercy on us! what dreadful noise is that?

Re-enter FACE.

Face. Oh, sir, we are all defeated, all the works are flown in fumo. [Exit *Subtle.*]

Sir E. Oh, Lungs! what, nothing saved?

Face. I fear nothing worth mention; yet the doctor, good soul, is gone to see—charity—charity, he says, may work a wonderful effect.

Sir E. I will do any thing—I will do all.

Face. Well, sir, for the present, suppose you bring one hundred to Bethlem, for those who have lost their wits; one hundred for the Magdalen, as sin of that kind has been your fault, and leave the sums to the disposal of our doctor: such marks of your contrition, and his prayers, may give a fresh process desirable effect.

Sir E. Thanks, Lungs, for thy advice; I doubt not it will speed, therefore the cash I will prepare—and henceforth be cautious of crack-brain'd beauty. [Exit.]

Sub. [*Peeps in*] What, is the lump of knightly flesh departed, *Face*?

Face. Yes, and with a heavy heart, but not quite hopeless.

Re-enter SUBTLE.

Sub. Right, thou play'st him to a hair—hark! I hear approaching steps. [Exit *Face*]. How often do the worldly wise, happy in their imagined policy, fool away substantial possessions pursuing shadows!

Re-enter FACE, with MISS RANTIPOLE.

Face. There, madam, is the gentleman I presume you want.

Miss R. Well, Mr. Conjuror, as I am told you are very intimate with the stars, I am inclined for a little conversation with you; and that we may better understand one another—there are a few guineas.

Sub. Give me leave, madam, as I see the charms of your person, though with the dim eyes of age, to inquire into the beauties of your pocket; as thence perhaps we may properly estimate the violent attachment of your numerous admirers.

Miss R. What, fortune you mean? that, sir, I am not ashamed to explain, having had these twelvemonths past, by the will of my good old grandfather, twenty thousand pounds at my own disposal.

Face. Nay, madam, it is not at all wonderful that you should have an admirer for every thousand—besides being at your own disposal, the fatigue and danger of a trip to Scotland are rendered unnecessary.

Miss R. True, sir—at the age of sixteen I was a fond, foolish, credulous creature, and thought of nothing but flames, darts, constancy, and dying—if a young fellow looked but grave—heigho! I pitied him; but now, as lady Fanny Flirtem says, if an army of lovers was before me, with pistols at their ears, daggers at their breasts, running nooses round their necks, or poison at their mouths, I could look on with the most immoveable composure, the true unfeeling, fashionable indifference.

Face. This is rather philosophical than humane.

Miss R. Humane, ha, ha, ha! and pray what have fine ladies to do with humanity?—though there is a young baronet in my train, who could occasion some flutter here, if he was a little more polished; but the teasing creature is so pettish, and so jealous, and so grave, and so wise—pray, Mr. Conjuror, could not you put him under the influence of some fashionable star?—I'll send him to see you—a little more taste, and lessen his gravity;—after I have had my fling, seen all the world, heard all the pretty things that can be said, fretted a score of lovers to death, and am on the brink

of becoming an old maid, perhaps I may sink into a domestic animal.—But you must excuse my abrupt departure; I have a dozen friendly pop visits to make in less than an hour, and would not miss one for the universe. [Exit.]

Sub. Truly, a volatile sprig of flirtation—but methinks I hear Abel's voice. [Exit Face]—Now, gravity and absence, wrap me round in thy deceptive robe.

Enter ABEL DRUGGER.

Well, master Tobacconist.

Drug. I have brought your worship a taste of right Oroonoko—or, if that's too mild—

Sub. This, as a mark of thy honest regard, will do.

Drug. I wish his honour, captain Face, had been here; I have not half the dacity to speak as when he is by.

Sub. Why not, my honest friend? a just case may always speak openly; but excuse me, reflection calls, and I must leave this world awhile.

Drug. Leave this world awhile—and yet he stands just where he did; but he's amongst the stars, and taking a thousand miles at a jump; why, these conjurers are—

Re-enter FACE, who slaps DRUGGER on the Shoulder.

Oh, you frightened me.

Face. So, honest Nab, I see thou art alone—for the doctor is with his spirits, but we'll upon him. [Apart.]

Sub. How now! what mates, what haiards have we here?

Face. I thought he would be furious—a piece of gold to soften him. [Apart.]

Drug. What, another? [Apart.]

Face. Ay, ay, what mar the sheep for a halfpenny worth of tar?—come, I'll give it the doctor. [Apart] Now thy business.

Drug. About a sign, sir.

Face. Ay, a good, lucky, thriving sign, doctor.

Sub. I have been thinking for his service—I will have none that's stale or common. A townsman born in Taurus gives the bull; or the bull's head—in Aries, the ram—both poor devices; no, let me form his name into some mystic character, whose radii, striking the senses of each passer by, shall with a virtual influence breed affections which may result upon the party that owns it.

Face. Mark that, Nab.

Sub. He shall have a bell, that's Abel.

Drug. Abel.

Sub. And by it standing one, whose name is Dee, in a rug gown.

Drug. A rug gown.

Sub. D and rug, you know, make Drug.

Face. Excellent.

Sub. And right against him, a dog snarling err.

Drug. Err, Abel Drugger—he, he, he! why, that's my name.

Sub. These emblems, thus conjoined, form a lucky sign with mystery and hieroglyphic.

Face. Why, Abel, thou art made.

Drug. I do humbly thank his worship.

Face. Six more such legs will not do it; thy word is passed to bring a piece of damask.

Drug. Yes, sir—but I have another thing I would impart.

Sub. Out with it, friend.

Drug. There visits near me a rich young widow.

Face. A bona roba.

Drug. Ay, rona boba, but nineteen at the most.

Sub. She whom thou mentionest is now in my study, casting a figure—I know her to be the same—tall.

Drug. Yes, an like your worship, she makes a parfit mushroom of me.

Sub. Chesnut hair—leering eye.

Drug. Very leering eye—your worship has her to a T.

Sub. I tell thee she is within; I'll work in thy favour,

and thou shalt have immediate conference—this tobacco is good thou gavest me; how much is there of it?

Drug. A very honest pound.

Face. Doctor, Nab will present thee with a hog'shead of it.

Drug. Won't half a one do?—it costs me——

[*Apart.*

Face. Pshaw, hang costs, when a rich widow's in the case. [*Apart*].—And he will furnish you also, grave sir, with one of the richest suits of damask he can procure.

Sub. Such men are worthy fortune's smiles—I'll send the widow.

[*Exit.*

Face. I'll follow, and keep the doctor warm in thy interest, little Nab.

[*Exit.*

Drug. Let me see what these conjurations will cost me—a two guinea piece, my ring, a pound of tobacco, then a hog'shead; besides a suit of damask, and wedding charges into the bargain—why, altogether can't come to less than—oh, here she is—what a charming figure to stand behind a counter—I'll warrant she'll sell twice as much as me; my shop will be the meeting-place of gallants.

Re-enter TRICKSY.

Trick. Oh, Mr. Tobacconist, your servant.

Drug. How softly her mouth opens, as if her lips were afraid to part; and then it shuts, as if they were glad to meet.

[*Aside.*

Trick. The charming creature is wrapped up in meditation; what can that wise set of features be engaged upon?

[*Aside.*

Drug. How softly spoken! one to my mind exactly—my head won't bear much noise. [*Aside*]. Oh, who would have thought to see you here? but they say mountains will meet.

Trick. Yes, sir, things little expected will happen—I never thought of losing my dear husband so soon, he was the be—be—best creature—

Drug. D—d—don't cry; for I am so tender hearted, I can't see any body cry but I must cry too.

Trick. I shall esteem you the more.

Drug. Esteem—now you talk that way, have you thought any more about our wedding?

Trick. Good sir, 'tis not for me to think in such a case; I must obey my fate, what the stars say—

Drug. Why I never knew the stars said any thing.

Trick. Oh, but they denote most certainly—if we come together, 'tis they must do it.

Drug. Say you so? then I'll go in and ask the doctor how and about it—he'll tell me any thing in the stars, or in the sun, or moon, or any where else.

Trick. He is indeed a wonderful man, and a most valuable friend.

Drug. Well, I'll go—now have I a good mind to ask a kiss—but I can't reach, and mayhap she may be ashamed to stoop before marriage—so I'll stay a bit.

[*Aside, and exit.*]

Trick. So there he goes—ha, ha, ha! a few minutes more, and my face would have betrayed me; gravity must soon have given way.

Head. [*Within*] Hollo, doctor—master alchemist!

Trick. My fighting swain, as I live; a little malapropos, but we must make the best on't.

Enter HEADLONG.

Head. How now, my buxom widow here? that's more than I thought for—tip us thy hand—I came to tell this here doctor what a rare scholar I am; I can almost quarrel with any body now—when he has made me perfect in the cross-buttock and brain blow, I shall not fear the best he that stands in shoe of leather.

Trick. Excellent; I love a man of spirit.

Head. Spirit to the back-bone; I never die dunghill—always game—I had a damned fine tussle in the Park just now.

Trick. Was it high fun?

Head. Rare rig! It would have made you burst your sides with laughing; you shall hear the whole affair.

Trick. Pray do; I love a bit of mischief vastly.

Head. Why, you must know, my girl of fire, as I was coming at a good spanking rate, from St. James's cockpit, what should I meet, in the flagged passage of Spring-garden, but a queer sort of a half gentleman; arm under arm, with a damned, rum, waddling wife, as I afterwards found she was.

Trick. Going, I suppose, to take a matrimonial walk in the Park—vulgar creatures, antediluvian wretches!

Head. You have hit it—as I brushed by with my arms a kimbo, this elbow went plump into madam's bread-basket; she staggered; the husband put on a fighting face, and cries, "What's that for?"—"What's that to you?" said I.—"It is to me," says he.—"You lie," says I.—"You are an impudent blockhead," says he.—"You are a ragamuffin," says I, "and take that"—giving him a tip across the cheek—into the Park we went—a ring was made, and as pretty a set-to we had, for about five minutes, as any one would wish to see; till giving him a plump of the jaw, which broke two of his grinders, he sickened, so gave up: then we shook hands and made friends.

Trick. Droll and pleasant to the last degree; ha, ha, ha!

Head. Oh! but I should have told you a merry affair that happened yesterday. After knocking off six bottles of Madeira, hand to fist—lord Graceless—a damned honest fellow, and myself, matched our nags from Windsor to London, the peer laying sixty guineas to forty:—well, off we set, and maintained a devilish deep rate till we came to Turnham-green, where the sport began; as we were tugging for the lead, whip and spur, I bolted a blind beggar into the ditch; in less than ten seconds his lordship flew over an old woman, riding upon an ass between two milk-pails; such a scene, ha, ha, ha! would have made Mr. What-d'ye-callum, the crying philosopher, himself laugh; here lay the peer's horse with his neck broke, there the old

woman groaning, yonder the ass kicking, and his lordship sprawling through the milky-way, like a wounded frog in a duck-pond.

Trick. Inimitable, ha, ha, ha! why this is higher life than your battle—besides, you won the wager.

Head. Yes, yes, widow, I touched the spankers, the yellow boys, and intend to lay 'em out in a present for you. When we are married, if any man does but squint at you, I'll plump and rib him.

Re-enter SUBTLE, FACE, and ABEL DRUGGER.

Mr. Doctor, I have been telling my widow here of the prettiest bruising-match—

Face. Mind that, Nab—speak to him—I'll second you.

[Apart to Drugger.]

Drug. Will you? then I'll do't. *[Apart]*—Your widow?—mayhap not.

Head. Mayhap ay—and if I hear any more of your haps, lookye, d'ye see, I'll give you a dounce o'th' chaps, mind that.

Drug. And if you do, you may get as good as you bring, for all your fighting face.

Trick. Nay, good gentlemen, don't fight on my account—I'll please you both, if I can.

Head. You—no, no, little buxom, only a few knocks for love, to see who's the best man, that's all—will you strip?

Drug. As soon as yourself.

Head. Now then come on, little tickle-pitcher.

Drug. I am at thee, bully bluff. *[They fight.]*

Face. Bravely done, my Hector of Troy, thou art victorious as Alexander, and shalt be crowned with tobacco instead of laurel; take thy fair widow, retire and compose thyself.

Drug. Master captain, I can feeze tightly, when I see occasion. *[Exit, with Tricksy.]*

Enter KNOWLIFE, with Constables.

Know. Come, walk in gentlemen, we'll clear this nest of hornets.

Re-enter FACE.

Face. How, my master returned! cursed chance then we are all undone—not a loophole to escape.

[*Aside:*

Know. Hey-day! what, my faithful Jeremy metamorphosed into an officerial appearance?

Face. Only an innocent frolic—if I had known your honour——

Know. Ay, ay, if you had known I was coming, you would have been better prepared, I doubt it not—why, hang-dog, what villanous work have you been making of this house during my absence?—no prevarication—I have heard of your converting it into an impostor-shop, where gulls have been decoyed to barter real property for empty hopes.—What, reverend cheat, art thou the leader of the gang? [*Brings Subtle forward.*

Sub. What a glorious harvest is here blasted!

Re-enter SIR EPICURE MAMMON.

Sir E. A feather-headed puppy had like to run me over, and was within a hair's breadth of tumbling me neck and heels down the whole flight of stairs—but here it is, my alchymist, here are the means of reparation; one hundred pounds for Bethlem, as much for the Magdalen, besides fifty to purchase fresh amalgama.

Know. What puffed-up bladder of folly have we here?

Sir E. I am a knight, and my alchymist there is to make me a knight of gold.

Know. Leave my house.

Sir E. Your house?

Know. Yes, mine, sir—no big looks, or I shall convince you of the property in a very disagreeable manner.

Sir E. Oons, if this be the case, I'll never trust the stars again, and every man that speaks a hard word, in my mind shall be a cheat—where's Mexico?—where's Peru?

[*Exit.*

Know. Now, culprits, what defence can you make?

Face. To be short, sir, having a mind above servitude, and talents to try a push in life, I was resolved to make the most of your absence; the prospect was very fair, but the fabric of my hopes, like a house of cards, is levelled by a single puff: however, having little to risk, I have only lost expectation; and having been guilty of no breach of trust respecting you, imagine myself tolerably safe from prosecution.

Know. Mightily well, evasive sir.

Sub. As for me, sir, at whom you look with an inquisitive eye, being as low as the blind goddess could lay me, I was ready to snatch at any means of amending painful circumstances—you will say, why turn impostor?—Look through the various classes of life, and you will see how many who hold high heads, with fair outsides, pursue worse practices;—you may style me a knave, but since I have taken care not to be a poor one, I shall draw that respect and safety from well-lined pockets, which pennyless, shame-faced honesty could never have obtained.

Re-enter ABEL DRUGGER and TRICKSY.

Drug. Master captain and master doctor, I have settled the whole affair—the widow here loves me like any thing.

Know. What unfeather'd cuckoo art thou?

Drug. Cuckoo in your teeth; I gave one a trimming just now; and if you jaw much, mayhap you may come in for your share—nay, you need not squint so at this lady; she is a rich widow, and is to be my wife.

Know. A rich widow! ha, ha, ha! thou art too contemptible for serious resentment, therefore I vouchsafe to tell thee this lady is my chambermaid, that captain my butler, and your grave alchymist there a cheat, picked up I know not where. As to these three, I'll secure them for justice sake, and leave you to find the same way out that you came in.

[*Exeunt all but Drugger.*]

Drug. The widow his chambermaid, the captain his

butler, and our wise alchymist a cheat—a pretty kettle of fish I have made of it—but escaping the marriage noose is some comfort however.

Well, left thus alone, I'll return to my shop,
And all future hopes from extrology drop;
Henceforth I shall think it a pitiful trade;
My head surely for conjuring never was made;
But if I could conjure—a very good cause
Should work my first spell—it should catch—your
applause. [Exit.

THE TWO MISERS.

A Musical Farce.

BY KANE O'HARA, ESQ.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

Author of several Dramatic Pieces.

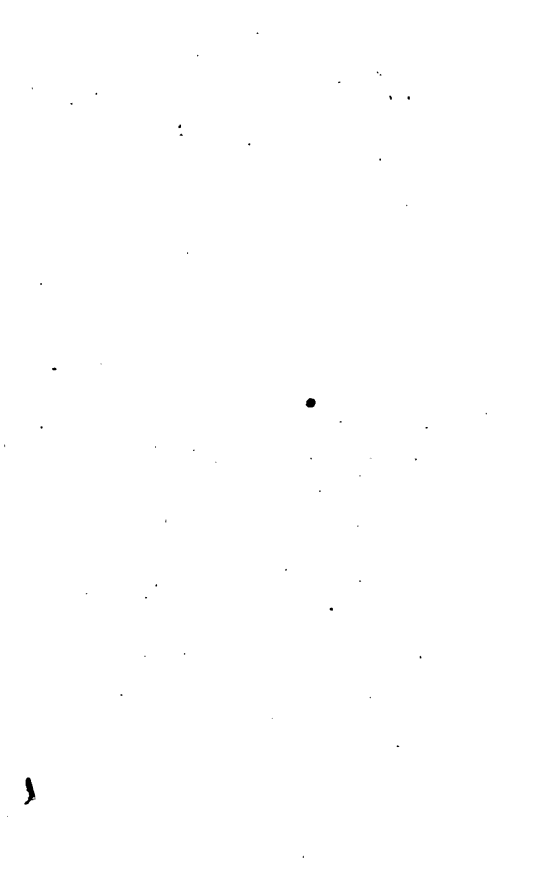


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1816.



THE TWO MISERS

Was first produced at Covent Garden in 1775. It is taken from LES DEUX AVARES, by M. Falhhaire. The bare outline only of his finished characters, with just enough of his dialogue to connect the incidents, has been retained, in order to reduce the whole within the compass of an English farce. It has always been honoured with great success, and is now revived, with some trifling alterations and additions, at Drury Lane Theatre.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally acted at Covent Garden. Drury Lane, 1816.

<i>Gripe</i>	Mr. Quick.	Mr. Gattie.
<i>Hunks</i>	Mr. Reinhold.	Mr. Knight.
<i>Lively</i>	Mr. Mattocks.	Mr. T. Cooke.
<i>Osman</i>	Mr. Danstall.	Mr. J. Smith.
<i>Ali</i>	Mr. Baker.	Mr. G. Smith.
<i>Mustapha</i>	Mr. Fox.	Mr. Cooke.
<i>Harriot</i>	Miss Catley.	Mrs. Dickons.
<i>Jenny</i>	Mrs. Mattocks.	Miss Kelly.

Janixaries' Guard.

SCENE—*The great Square in SMYRNA.*

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I.

The great Square. At the right Corner, in front, GRIPE'S House, with a low Door in its side to the Square, and over the Door a Window; some paces backward, toward the Centre of the Stage, rises a large quadrangular Pyramid; at the left Corner of the Square, in front, stands HUNKS'S House, viewed in Profile; in its Side, facing the Audience, are two Windows, the lower defended by iron Bars from top to bottom. Other Buildings, as Mosques, Mindrets, Dwelling-houses, &c. complete the Sides of the Square to the distant flat Scene, which affords a Night-prospect of the Sea and Harbour, shut out by a stately iron Palisade. Near it, on the right Hand, a single House projects; having one spacious and very large Window on the second Floor. To the left, in front, near HUNKS'S House, is a Draw-well, surrounded by a low Breast-wall, whereon are fixed two strong Posts, with a Cross-bar at top to support a large Pulley. Two opposite Streets open into the Square. At their entrance are set up large Globe Lamps, casting a strong Light over the whole Scene.

LIVELY appears at HUNKS'S upper Window, hems and coughs repeatedly, as Signals to HARRIOT.

Live. **H**EM! hem! She does not hear me sure:
I'll sing then.

AIR.

At eve, sweet Philomel's fond lay,
 His Philomela cheers;
 So love, whom spies o'erawe by day,
 Casts off at night his fears. [*Listens.*]

Hush! no, all quiet; her window still shut. Ah! her
 uncle's within. [*Listens*] Eh! no; try again. Hem,
 hem! [*Sings louder.*]

At eve, sweet Philomel's fond lay,
 His Philomela cheers.

[*Harriot, attended by Jenny, shows herself at Gripe's
 Window; she opens it, and in a low Voice answers,
 singing to the latter strain of the same Air.*]

Har. Love, though disguis'd by fears all day,
 By night unmask'd appears.

Live. My Harriot! your uncle's gone, then?
 [*Pleased.*]

Har. Gone—and yours?

Live. Gone too. Shall we down into the square?

Jenny. Hist, hist! some one coming. 'Protest, Mr.
 Lively, your uncle Hunks. Retire, retire, and let him
 pass.

[*Lively retires, shutting his Window. They keep
 theirs half shut, watching Hunks's motions.*]

*Enter HUNKS slowly from the left Side, stops now and
 then, peeping round.*

Hunks. A murrain seize the inventor of these tell-
 tale lamps! the very bane of all clandestine enter-
 prize! Why, here, 'tis as light as day now. I'fecks,
 we might as well have no night at all. Then those
 damned janizaries, everlastingly patrolling and prying.
 Vexation upon vexation! however, 'tis luckily rather
 latish, and this a solitary quarter. Who knows? I
 may chance to execute my scheme still. [*Sees Gripe at
 a distance*] Pash! what interloper now?
 [*Steps aside to observe.*]

Jenny. [*At the Window seeing Gripe*] So! here comes t'other skinflint, Gripe himself; away, miss, away.

Enter GRIFE, pleased; who draws forth a large Bunch of Keys.

Gripe. Such a gull, ha, ha, ha! Bled so freely! but, no tick; no, no, the rooks would not tick. Pise on it! he has had a devilish tumble! Well, well, speed the plough; his loss, my gain. Twenty per cent. premium, and two per cent. by the hour: no bad tontine.

AIR.

Let the novice depend on his luck,
On his science the gambler profess;
What pigeon soever they pluck,
With his plumes I shall feather my nest.
They fling, they ding,
They swear, they tear,
While snug I look on and sit still:
For well I trow,
Blow high, blow low,
Each puff will bring grist to my mill.

A bird in the bush, we are told,
Is pretty enough to the view;
But I think, when I look on my gold,
That one in the hand is worth two.
For birds will fly,
But what care I,
While thus I can hold 'em at will.
Blow high, blow low,
They never shall go;
But and bring grist to my mill.

[*Unlocks his Door in a hurry, goes in, and shuts it.*
At the same moment Hunks comes forward.

Hunks. Gossip Gripe! Well, he's housed. And now to reconnoitre my scene of action. [*Surveying the Pyramid accurately*] Here then it is, underneath this pyramid—that—they have deposited the carcass of his

mustiship, and along with it—all his gold, his plate, his diamonds, his—— [*Hugging himself*] O Hunks, Hunks! what a treasure were here now——Acapulco!

AIR.

My dear treasure always nigh me,
Night and day my strong box by me;
Still to spy it,

Try it,

Eye it,

Feel

And kneel,

And deify it.

O what transport to behold,
What delight to chink my gold.

Mahomet's a scurvy prophet,

His fool's paradise, I scoff it.

Think to gull folks with his houris!

Beggar wenches without dowries!

Had he feign'd his heav'n of pelf,

I'd ha' been a Turk myself.

Live. [*Opens the Window softly*] Pest seize him!
will he never be gone? [*Aside. Shuts the Window.*

Hunks. [*Again surveying the Pyramid*] No child's
play to make a breach here; must get help, i'fecks!
[*Ponders*] Gripe! yes, the very man; but he—he'll be
for going snacks; well, better give half than lose all.
Ay, ay, and here he comes, just in the nick.

Re-enter GRIPE, from his House.

Gripe. [*To himself, while locking the Door*] Safe
hind, safe find; forage abroad, but guard at home.
Pise on't, how I loiter.

[*Pockets the Keys; as he is hobbling away, Hunks
calls after him.*

Hunks. Gripe! Gossip Gripe!

Gripe. [*Just looking back with a nod*] Good night.
Can't stay.

Hunks. A moment. Lord, man! what's your hurry?

Gripe. [Coming back] Hurry! why, Squander, the young merchant, fall'n in at bazard yonder with some knowing ones, is fleeced, done up to the last shilling, so I'm fetching him a supply—Two hundred pieces.

Hunks. And at what interest? [Earnestly.]

Gripe. Pise on it! a mere nothing: two per cent.

Hunks. Are you turned fool? Two per cent.!

[In surprise.]

Gripe. Ay—by the hour.

Hunks. Oh! cry you mercy! But, Gossip! [With a mysterious Air] I—Observe that pyramid—Yesterday, in a vault—beneath that pyramid—was interr'd the late musti—

Gripe. Well, peace be with him. [With indifference.]

Hunks. Ye-s, and his rhino with us! for you must know, that here in Smyrna, when a musti dies, they bury all his riches with him; they do, i'fecks.

Gripe. Indeed! in that case, 'twould scarce vex a man to die.

Hunks. It does mitigate, to be sure.

Gripe. [After a Pause] All his riches buried with him! [Eyeing the Pyramid, then eagerly to Hunks] Pise on it, Gossip! here were a venture now! Eh?

Hunks. [Seeming to hesitate] And yet—I have my scruples. An't it a sin think you to disturb the ashes of the dead? But then the price is so great.

Gripe. We're to go halves!

Hunks. A sacrilego! eh?

Gripe. Not if we go halves.

RECITATIVE.

Gripe. Indeed had he a Christian been,

Hunks. O, ay, had he a Christian been,

Gripe. Nice casuists might perhaps!

Hunks. Might what?

Gripe. Pronounce it sin.

DUET.—GRIPE and HUNKS.

Gripe. But a vile Turk, a musti too.

Hunks. Yes, Turk, and musti too.

A foe to wine, 'tis true, 'tis true.

Gripe. A foe to wine, 'tis true, 'tis true.

Let's take.

Hunks. Let's seize on all he left.

'Tis lawful spoil,

Gripe. Not sinful theft.

Hunks. 'Tis lawful spoil, not sinful theft.

[*They shake Hands, and are going off, when Lively appears at his Window.*]

Live. Rot 'em, will they sleep here? Ah! he saw me.

[*Shuts the Window.*]

Gripe. [*Turning hastily*] Ha! somebody at that window, methought!

Hunks. My hopeful nephew, 'tis like—a scapegrace! but, i'fecks, I shall soon rid my hands of him; I'll shut him up in a mad-house!

Gripe. An excellent scheme! Ay, ay, oleau straw and a dark cell. The scoundrel flirts with my niece too; but, by your leave, I forbid the banns there. They'd instantly call us to account for their fortunes.

Hunks. They would, and be ever gaping, gaping at ours. But we waste time. Come, come along with me, to get the implements for our enterprise.

Gripe. Can't you as well step for them yourself? one business must not obstruct another; I'll but carry my spark this cash, just hard by, and be back presently.

[*As the two Misers are going off, Harriot appears at her Window attended by Jenny; they make Signs of great joy, then retire as descending into the Square. In the mean time Lively unscrews a Bar of his Window, leaps down, and runs to meet Harriot. Jenny withdraws to watch.*]

DUET.—HARRIOT AND LIVELY.

Har. They're gone, and our flames we may freely reveal.

Live. What transport in this precious moment I feel.

My Harriot.

Har. My Lively.

Live. My Harriot.

Har. My Lively.

Live. In vain they our hearts would dis sever ;

I love, and will love you for ever.

Har. In vain they our hearts would dis sever.

Live. For Harriot I live, and for Harriot would die.

Har. Ah, Lively, I swear, and this heart cannot lie,

I will ne'er be but yours.

Live. What! never?

Nor ever will I be but yours.

Har. What! never?

Live. No, never will I be but yours.

Har. Though Gripe locks his doors,

[Points at the Door open.

Live. Though his windows Hunks grates,

[Points to the unscrewed Bar.

Har. Love loves to make fools of such wary grey pates.

Live. Love loves to o'erreach such designing bald pates.

Deign love then to guide us,

Har. For ever;

Nor suffer these grubs to divide us.

Live. Oh, never!

Har. Deign love then to guide us, for ever.

Live. They shall not divide us: no, never.

Jenny. [Rejoins them] Well, my dears, since upright love is your motive, and downright matrimony your end, I think I must even beat about to bring you together.

Live. But when, dear Jenny, when? [Eagerly.

Jenny. Sooner, perhaps, than you imagine. Miss has an aunt in Dublin, lady Mildmay; her heart and house are open to you.

Live. Why aren't we gone then? What stops us?

Jenny. Stops! what stops many an hopeful project?

lack of cash. [*Looks archly at him*] Are you flush, sir? [*He shakes his Head sorrowfully*] So I thought; and therefore hold it bad policy to leave all miss's fortune, all her mamma's effects, in Gripe's clutches. Cheer up, however; a lucky crisis may come, and trust me for not letting it slip.

Live. Infernal muck-worms! 'Sdeath! I grow wild with resentment; but you, my love, you seem quite unconcerned.

Har. Pardon me, dear Lively! I feel the utmost contempt of their depravity, mixed with a kind of pity for my uncle's foible. But [*Takes his Hand, and looks fondly at him*] the truth is—that——

AIR.—HARRIOT.

At thy presence, vengeful passion,
Envy, hate, and indignation,
From this tranquil bosom fly:
Wealth, by gold, let miscreants measure;
Be but Lively's heart my treasure,
Gripe will be less rich than I.

Jenny. In, in, get ye in; here's Gripe a-coming.

Har. My uncle! O lud, I shall die in a fright.

[*Runs into the House with Jenny, who locks the Door.*]

Live. Plague welcome him.

[*Leaps in at his Window, and replaces the Bar.*]

Re-enter GRIPE, walking leisurely, with a Parchment Bond in his Hand.

Gripe. Here's the bond, stamped and all. Servant, kind Mr. Squander! will you any more rouleaux, at the same discount? He, he, he! I ha' totted it up: two hundred pistoles, at two per cent. by the hour, will amount, in six months (with interest upon interest), to about twenty thousand pounds sterling. Good, good! Pise on it, I'll have an execution in petto; then smash go his magazines, his town house, his villa; all mine, all mine. Come, come, upon the whole, no dear purchase. [*Pulls out a Bunch of Keys, and unlocks his Door, leaving the Key in the Lock*] Jenny! Janny! I say.

Jenny. [*Above at the Window*] Sir.

Gripe. Fetch hither my supper, hussy.

Jenny. Your every day supper, sir?

Gripe. Yes; and the bottle of Cyprus wine. [*Exit*

Jenny. Gripe takes a turn in the Square towards Hunk's House] I ha' made too good a day's work on't to grudge myself wine at night.

Live. [*Softly opening the Window*] What is he muttering there? [*Aside.*

Gripe. A lucky day has this been, both to Hunk and me; and to-morrow he'll finish this glorious work by getting that nephew of his shut up for life.

Live. How, how? the infamous wretch! shut up for life indeed. I shall give him the slip though.

[*Aside, and withdraws, shutting the Window.*

GRIPPE, retreating towards his own Door, is met by JENNY, carrying a morsel of Bread, a Phial Bottle half full of Wine, and a diminutive Glass, on a Pewter Plate.

Jenny. Here, sir.

Gripe. What's Harriot a doing?

[*Eating, and holding the Glass to be filled.*

Jenny. Waiting for you. We have not supped.

Gripe. Well, you may [*Sips*] go to bed.—Must!

[*To himself.*

Jenny. Best go in a door, sir.

Gripe. [*Walks to and fro, munching and sipping*]

No.—Warm rogues, your musties! [*Aside*]—I shan't come home to-night, mayhap. [*To her. Holds out the Glass to be filled*]—A plum, at least. [*Aside.*

Jenny. [*Staring at him, and not filling*] Why, sir, 'tis wine—Wine, sir. [*Louder.*

Gripe. Eh? Pise on't, I wasn't minding. Here, look up [*Gives her the Glass and remnant of Bread*] this for to-morrow. O, a mint! a mine! the Indies! I fly, I fly. [*In ecstasy. Hurries away, leaving his Keys.*

Jenny. [*Looks after him*] Quite frantio, I declare, [*Going in*] and has forgot—nay, as I'm alive, he has—[*Runs in with the things, then seizes the Keys, and calls*

aloud] Mr. Lively! Miss Harriot! [*They look out*] Come down, come down. [*They disappear. Jenny turns over the Keys*] Ay, this is the key of his den; this of the iron door to his closet; and this——

Re-enter HARRIOT and LIVELY.

See here, my lambkins! the crisis is come; Gripe has forgot his keys. See; he said he should not be at home to-night. But there's no trusting to that: so, while I step in, stay you here, and watch. I'll not return empty-handed, I promise you.

[*Runs joyfully into the House.*]

Live. Faith, my dearest Harriot! 'twas high time—do you know, that my vile uncle is plotting to get me confined?

Har. Confined! on what pretext?

Live. Madness, I suppose. But let him catch me if he can. The tables are now turned, and our escape secured past prevention.

Har. I am on thorns to embark! My heart presages we shall be happy in Europe.

Re-enter JENNY; on her Arm a Basket crammed full, in her Hand a Band-box, a Casket, and parcels of Paper wrapped up in an Apron.

Jenny. Joy, joy! the deeds! the chattels! I have them all. [*To Harriot*] Now, take wing like two turtle-doves. [*Recollecting*] Hang it! I forgot. Here, these. [*Delivers them in a hurry*] Be careful of the contents; I'll be back immediately. [*Exit.*]

Har. O mercy, what a load of finery! Come, Lively! let's sit down, and lay 'em all in order. [*They sit on the Wall of the Draw-well, placing the Apron and Basket between them, then range the Parcels out of the one into the other*] And first, this bundle of—bonds, I suppose, at bottom.

Live. Next, this band-box in the corner—so; and here, on this side, the casket of jewels.

Har. Stay, let me just take a peep. O, Lively! such noble brilliants.

Live. With what delight shall I see my angel wear them! Ah, Harriot! how enchanting is that look! while your eyes thus tenderly shoot into mine, 'tis perfect ecstacy! [*Springs to embrace her.*

Har. How now, sir? what liberty? [*Resentfully.* Takes her Hand off the Basket to repel him; the Basket and Apron fall into the Well; she screams] O heavens, the basket's dropped into the well.

Re-enter JENNY, who overhears her, and screams.

Jenny. Heavens and earth, into the well!

[*Lively turns away in confusion.*

Har. A silly youth! with his hoydenish pranks.

[*Whimpers.*

Live. I was sure she had hold on't; so in my transport—

Jenny. Transport! nonsense! Yes, yes, we're finely on our way now. Lovers! lovers! say I; wretch that I am.

[*Wrings her Hands.*

Live. Patience, Jenny! can't I go down for them?

Jenny. 'Egad, that's true; and, by my troth, so you shall, Mr. Transport.

[*Ironically.*

Har. Into the well?

[*Alarmed, and runs to look down into it.*

Jenny. La! what are you so afraid of? 'tis really not deep; and, besides, has been dry this long while.

Live. [*Looks up at the Pulley*] Ay, but where's the rope?

Jenny. We can take the rope and bucket off Gripe's well. Come, let's in a bit for the present; the patrolle will be going their rounds, and they must not surprise us. [*Exeunt into Gripe's House, shutting the Door.*

The Guards March is played. Enter ALI, at the Head of the Janizaries, marching in Files. They halt in the middle of the Square.

Ali. Don't you observe, lads, the nocturnal stillness of this city, ever since our corps has mounted guard here?

Osman. True, captain; every body allows it.

Ali. [*Struts importantly*] Let's keep it up then. Hearken to your orders. Hem! hem! To you, Osman; for this night, I consign half the corps, and half the city, westward. You, Mustapha! with the remainder, follow me: this square shall be our place of rendezvous.

Mus. In faith, noble captain, a masterly manœuvre.

Ali. Now take heed all: let your march be orderly and silent. One thing more: I have intelligence of a tavern hereabout, where, in mockery of our holy law, wine is privily sold to the true believers. Those quarters I shall beat up, and, if the wine be good, secure it for our secret service. Whisker of Mahomet, there's nothing like maintaining strict order and discipline. Make ready, march.

AIR.—TURKISH MARCH.

[*All march round the Stage, singing.*

The guard their midnight rounds begin,
Let all retire; let cease all din:
Home, home, without delaying,
No murmur; no gainsaying:
Hush! high and low degree;
So wills our lord cadî.

[*Exeunt. Osman, with his Party, file off to the left; Ali, with his, to the right.*

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I. *The same.*

Enter GRIPE, walking circumspectly about the Square, peeping and listening on all sides.

RECITATIVE, accompanied.—GRIPE.

If it were done, when 'tis done ; then 'twere well,
It were done quickly.

Th' attempt, and not the deed, confounds us—strictly.
The sleeping and the dead are but as pictures,
Then—we shall both be Cræsus's—if victors.

I'll fetch Hunks. [*Ponders*] May I trust him on this job?
Besides, the rigour of these Turkish laws!
To swing ; forfeit my wealth ! Ay, there's the rub
Must give us pause.

AIR.

What a cursed hole I'm in,
Yet must on through thick and thin :
If my gossip, Hanks, should peach,
I'm within the cadî's reach.
After all, 'tis a crack rope venture ;
He the vault alone shall enter.

His shall be the art of thieving,
 Mine but that of bare receiving.
 'Gad, if I ben't sharp and sly,
 He'll clap flatt'ry to my eye.

[Exit.

Enter, from GRIPE'S House, LIVELY, with a large Rope in his Hand, JENNY with a Bucket, and HARRIOT following.

Live. Escape? ay, sure, nothing to stop us; there's a ship sails in the morning: her captain is my acquaintance, and has engaged to take us on board.

Har. Lucky though, that my uncle stays abroad all night.

AIR.

Like the tuneful linnet gay,
 Long I sported in the May,
 And echo-heard my cheerful call;
 I just could tattle,
 Chirp and prattle;
 I just could sing, and that was all.
 But now I perch, and plume, and pride,
 And more than tattle,
 Chirp and prattle,
 I now can sing, and love beside.

Live. Yes, we shall be under sail ere missed. [*Mounts on the Breast-wall, and slips the Rope into the Pulley*] O 'gad, how gaily we shall live in Ireland upon the funds of this well. [*Leaps down, and hands the Rope's End to Jenny*] Ireland, my Harriot! that's your true female Paradise. There you'll all be queens, empresses, sultanas—eh, Jenny?

Jenny. Ay, ay. Well, this is secured; all's ready.

[*Hangs the Bucket over the Well.*

Live. Come then, down I go.

Har. But, hark'ye, are you sure there's no danger?

Jenny. Danger!—Why, the well is quite dry, I tell you.

[*Lively sits upon the Wall, and puts his Feet in the Bucket, while they lay hold of the Rope.*

TRIO.—HARRIOT, LIVELY, and JENNY.

Har. Hold the rope fast—hold faster. [To Jenny.
For you I'm in pains, my dear. [To Lively.

Live. Why should you dread disaster?
Kind love is my guide, never fear.

Har. I would it were past!
Now, now hold fast. [To Jenny.

Live. The worst is past.

Jenny. I do hold fast.

Har. La! I'm in a terrible fright.

Live. Now down I go. [Gradually disappears.

Jenny. So, so, so, so.

Live. And the motion's slow.

Har. Have a care below.

Live. You've nothing to do but hold tight.

Jenny. We all shall be made by this night.

Har. Ah! now he's quite out of sight.

Jenny. The basket, pray save it. [To Lively.

Live. I have it.

Har. I'm glad he has got no hurt.

Jenny. The casket, don't leave it. [To Lively.

Live. I've pick'd 'em both out of the dirt.

Jenny. Next find the cloth. [To Lively.

Live. I'll get it.

Har. Dence take ye both! I'm fretted.

Live. All's safe—and now let us retreat.

Jenny. Now let us retreat.

Har. Let us retreat.

Don't loiter thus;

For I'm in fuss,

For fear we be caught in the street.

[Jenny turning about, sees Gripe and Hunk
at a distance.

Jenny. Who are these two, coming yonder?

Har. Coming yonder?

Good lack! our uncles!

Jenny. Your uncles, I swear.

Har. What brings 'em home so soon, I wonder?

Old Nick must sure have conjur'd 'em there.

Jenny. Nick take the troublesome pair.

Live. Hawl, hawl away, hawl.

Har. Hush, hush, do not bawl.

Jenny. He will ruin us all.

Live. I'm ready; what makes you delay?

Har. Our uncles are coming this way.

Jenny. There's company coming this way.

Har. We're forc'd to retire.

Live. Blood and fire!

Jenny. Have patience, squire.

Har. We're surely caught, if we stay.

Live. You'll keep me here till 'tis day.

Jenny. Excuse this little delay.

[*Harriot and Jenny escape into Gripe's House, and shut the Door.*]

Enter; on the left, HUNKS, carrying a Lantern, followed by GRIPE, carrying a Ladder and an Iron Crow: as they advance, LIVELY, in the Well, continues calling to HARRIOT and JENNY.

Live. Hawl, hawl away, hawl!

Hunks. [*Hearing the Voice, turns short*] Eh! what are you muttering, gossip?

Gripe. Nothing I.—Wasn't it you that spoke?

Hunks. No.

[*Lays down the Sledge near the Well, Gripe throws down the Crow.*]

Gripe. Oh, pise on't! [*Groans*] this damn'd ladder has broke my back.

[*Goes to set it up beneath the deep Window of the distant House.*]

Hunks. What matter, man?—No gains without pains, i'feck.—Now, how to set about this job?

[*Takes the Lantern to examine the Pyramid.*]

Gripe. Why, this whole front is but one single stone.

[*Examines it likewise.*]

Hunks. Just hit it with your sledge.

[*Claps his Ear to it.*]

Gripe. Well, how does it sound?

[*Strikes gently in several Parts.*]

Hunks. Hollow, hollow.—This must be the entrance,

i'fecks, gossip, and that same stone we must force out.
[Takes up the Sledge, and Gripe the Crow.

DUET.—GRIPE and HUNKS.

Gripe. Now, gossip, now, gossip, strike home.

Hunks. And you too, good gossip, strike home.

Gripe. We'll soon make a breach in this tomb.

Strike it harder, I warrant 'twill come.

Hunks. 'Twill come.

Gripe. 'Twill come.

Both. 'Twill come.

Gripe. Once more.

Hunks. Once more—the mortar is crumbling.

Gripe. 'Tis crumbling—I now see the joint.

'Tis tumbling.

Hunks. 'Tis tumbling.—Stick to the point.

Both. Let's stick to the point.

Gripe. Pray hand me the crow.

Now double your blow.

Hunks. I will strike while you pinch.

Gripe. It comes.

Hunks. It comes.

Both. It comes inch by inch.

Gripe. Now strike—it comes.

Hunks. Now pinch—it comes.

Both. It comes inch by inch.

Gripe. It totters.

Hunks. It totters.

Both. To fall it begins.

Gripe. Look to your shins.

Hunks. Look to your shins.

Gripe. Look, look to your shins.

Hunks. Zooks! look to your shins.

[The Stone tumbling with Noise, shows the Entrance of the Vault, defended by an iron Portcullis. They mean while throw aside their Tools, advance to the Front of the Stage, and embrace exultingly.]

Gripe. So! that task's finished, and the treasure's our own.

Hunks. [*Turning to the Pyramid*] Finished! yes, to be sure, rarely finished! why, there's a huge iron grate still. Stay. [*Takes the Lantern to examine.*]

Gripe. No trifling hoard for certain, so firmly barricaded. [*Aside.*]

Hunks. Oh! we may compass it yet! Here's a groove, you see, shows 'tis a slider. Hold this. [*Presents the Lantern*] I'll try to lift it. [*Exerts himself*] No, i'fecks, I an't strong enough; lend me a hand.

Gripe. [*Sets down the Lantern, and goes to assist him*] Now, lay to o'your side. That's it; let's raise it quite up.

Hunks. There it goes; high enough, if we had something to clap under it.

Gripe. Bear it up, while I run for the crow. [*Having fixed it*] Let go now; it can't fall.

Hunks. That's clever, i'fecks! Stay; is the vault deep? Why, [*Takes the Lantern, and looks down*] our ladder was needless; here's a little stairoase.

Gripe. All the better. Now then, down wi' ye; you have the lantern.

Hunks. Here, gossip, take it you, and go down yourself.

Gripe. A tomb—I—troth, gossip, I'm afraid I should never get alive to the bottom.

Hunks. [*Snatching the Lantern from him*] Pshaw! poltroon, give it me; I'll go down myself. [*Going to the Pyramid, turns to Gripe*] But take notice, I'll ha' the larger share.

Gripe. Go down, go down, man; we'll settle that afterwards.

Hunks. [*Entering the Pyramid*] I'fecks, I'm all in a flutter too; but then the treasure—ay, that keeps me up. [*Goes down.*]

Har. [*Softly opens her Window*] Still there! alas, poor Lively! [*Shuts the Window.*]

Gripe. [*At the mouth of the Vault to Hunks below*] Well, are you at bottom? Is there much? Throw up to me whatever you find.

Hunks. [*Below*] Find! I'fecks, I find nothing; but this Turk's cloak. [*Throws out a Castan.*]

Gripe. [*Impatiently*] Pise on it! what has the booby hung up here? [*Examines it*] a pretty rag, wot. [*Going nearer to the Vault*] The gold, the diamonds, man! That's all you need mind.

Hunks. There, there's a mafi's cap for you.

[*Throws out a Turban.*]

Gripe. [*Angrily*] Musti yourself, sirrah. [*Stamps on the Turban, leans into the Vault and bawls*] What the devil are you about? The gold, I say; the jewels. Are you mad?

Hunks. No such gear, i'fecks; not a jot else, unless you'll ha' the corpse.

Gripe. O ho! you want to keep all, do you? These your tricks? Ay, I suspected as much.

Hunks. Why, step down yourself, and see. I give you my oath.

Gripe. Your oath! you worthless dog.

Hunks. Hey! This to me? you old curmudgeon.

Gripe. Yes, you may well talk, you shabby, swindling scoundrel! but, sirrah, you shall——

Hunks. [*Thoroughly exasperated*] Stay, rascal! stay till I come up and break your bones.

[*The light of the Candle begins to re-appear, and with it Hunks in a rage. Gripe suddenly takes out the Crow that supported the Grate, which falls at once, and shuts in Hunks.*]

Gripe. My bones; ha, ha, ha! you will, jail bird.

[*Insultingly.*]

Hunks. [*Vainly labouring to raise the Grate*] The treacherous villain! Why, sirrah! you don't mean——

Gripe. [*To himself*] Gull'd! defrauded! nay, exposed to the gallows! and, [*Kicking the Turban and Robe*] and all for—for this trumpery.

[*Flings them into the Well, muttering curses.*]

Ali. [*Behind the Scenes, in a low imperious Tone*] Who's there? Stand, ho!

Hunks. [*In terror*] Meroy on us! 'tis the patrolo! Harkye, Gripe, if I be caught I'll impeach you; I will, i'fecks.

Gripe. Pise on it, so he may. [*Alarmed. Aside*]——

Hush, hush, dear gossip! Pho, man, I was but in jest. Do, run down again quick, and hide your lantern. When they are passed I'll come and release you.

[In a low Voice, wheedling.]

Hunks. [Retiring] At your own peril, cut-throat! be assur'd I'll not swing single.

[Hunks retires into the Vault; Gripe hurries to his own Door, where, searching in all his Pockets, he misses his Keys; the Janizaries are heard approaching tumultuously.]

Gripe. My keys! undone! robbed! beggared! [In consternation] Oh! they're coming! what shall I do? [Hobbles to the other Side distractedly] Pise on it! stay, I'll even mount that ladder—my last shift—skulk in the hollow of the window; perhaps they mayn't see me.

[Climbs up in haste, and stands in the Window.]

Enter, from the right, ALI, with four Janizaries, half drunk, each carrying two Bottles and a drinking Cup; on the opposite side, OSMAN, with his Party: they are surprised at the intoxication of their Comrades, but, getting from them each one Bottle, they fall to guzzling in long draughts. During the Symphony of the ensuing Catch, a faint Light glimmers from the Vault.

CATCH.—ALI, MUSTAPHA, and JANIZARY.

Ali. }
Must. } Fill every lad his cup.
Jan. }

Ali. Fill it a bumper.

Jan. Mine's a thumper.

Must. Drink it up.

[Ali drinks, making a noise in his Throat while swallowing, viz.

Ali. Wi—ne.

Must. }
Jan. } Swill 'till mellow! honest fellow.

Ali. I don't leave one drop in mine.

[Mustapha drinks, making the same Noise.]

Must. Wi——no.

Ali. } Swill till, &c.
Jan. }

Must. I don't leave, &c.

[*Janizary drinks, making the same Noise.*]

Jan. Wi——no.

Must. } Swill till, &c.
Ali. }

Ali. { Let drones pore on

Must. { Their dull coran,

Jan. { While we're laughing,

{ Gaily quaffing,

All. Rosy wine.

[*Ali's Men lay aside their Bottles and Cups, and then come back. Osman and his Party sit down on the further end of the Stage, continuing to drink; one of Ali's men seats himself close to the Draw-well, leaning his Elbow on the Wall; two others place themselves near him, sitting. Ali and Mustapha stagger forward.*]

Ali. [*His Hand upon his Breast as in Pain*] And yet, this devilish liquor parches one up. [*Hiccups*] By Mecca, my stomach's a coal of fire.

Must. And mine boiling oil, by Omar! But see! here's a well; let's draw some water, [*Hiccups*] 'twill quench us.

Ali. Right; and the rope's in the pulley too. [*They lay hold on the Cord, and begin to Pull. The other three drunk fall asleep and snore*] Now, both together.

Must. [*Looking toward the Pyramid*] Eh! bless me! don't I see a light from yonder monument? and a hole broke in the front, I think.

Ali. Damned heavy, this same water.

[*Tugging the Cord.*]

Must. Nay, but look! if I have eyes——

[*Still looking to the Pyramid.*]

Ali. Pho! confound ye, pull away, Visionary! 'Cause the musti was buried there, you're afraid he'll

rise and eat you. Eh? [*Looking towards the Pyramid, and pulling with all his might*] See! what can you see? Were I to see the devil, I'd no more matter——

[*Lively, drawn up in the Bucket, while their Heads are turned aside, appears dressed in the Musti's Turban and Robe, with the Basket on his Arm; he lays hold on one of the Posts with his left Hand, and springs upon the Wall, giving, at the same instant with his right Hand, a hearty Box on the Ear to the sleeping Janizary next to him, who, in a fright tumbles upon his Comrade; they, struggling to rise, obstruct each other. Meanwhile Ali and Mustapha, pulling hard and not being longer resisted by Lively's weight, suddenly fall; letting go the Rope, the Bucket falls.*]

Live. [*Standing on the Breast-wall, bellows out*] Boo! miscreants! boo!

Janizaries. Oh, oh! the musti! the devil!

Ali. [*Coming up in terror*] Accursed wine! A judgment! our prophet's vengeance!

[*Runs off.* *Mustapha and Osman with his Party rise in a fright, and running away throw down the Ladder.*]

Janizaries. The devil! the musti himself at our heels! Run, run.

[*Exeunt.* *Hunks, alarmed, comes up to the Grate. Gripe stands trembling in the Window.*]

Live. [*Upon the Wall*] Ha, ha! I think I have scar'd the rascals. [*Leaps down.*]

Gripe. [*Quaking for Fear*] Save us! A spectre! I shall tumble headlong.

Live. [*Aloud at Gripe's Door*] Jenny! Jenny! come down, 'tis I. [*Gazing joyfully at his Basket.*]

Jenny. [*Within*] Mr. Lively's voice, I vow. Quick, quick, miss.

Gripe. [*Astonished*] Benedicite!—Pise on it, I'll make off——Distraction! my ladder thrown down! and the cadi—posting hither.

Enter HARRIOT and JENNY, running.

Har. Is it you, my dear sir? [*She and Jenny, frightened at the Mufti's Habit, run back screaming*] Ah! Ah!

Live. [*Overtakes them*] Stop, stop! don't squall! What ails ye? [*Throwing off the Turban and Robe*]
'Tis I—Lively. [*They stare.*]

Gripe. How? Lively! [*Amazed.*]

Hunks. My nephew! he'll help me out, i'fecks.
 [*Surprised, but pleased.*]

Har. [*Coming to herself*] Lud! how you frightened me—that strange disguise.
 [*To Lively.*]

Jenny. [*Springs at the Basket on his Arm*] This is safe, however, and now, my loves, for Europe, ho!

Live. Ay, ay, now or never. [*All hurrying off.*]

Hunks. [*Calls piteously from the Grate*] Lively!
 [*Lively starts and looks back.*]

Gripe. [*From the Window at the same time*] Harriot!
 [*Harriot starts.*]

Har. [*Fainting*] Our uncles! good heavens!

Jenny. *Live.* [*Supporting her*] Away! away! away!
 [*Going.*]

Hunks. Ah! Lively, can you forsake me thus?

Gripe. My dear Harriot! won't you stay and help me?
 [*Harriot and Lively stand amazed; Jenny bursts into a fit of Laughter.*]

Jenny. Ha, ha, ha! was ever sight so ridiculous? Ha, ha! Look at 'em! this owl in his cage, and that dried mummy in his niche! Ha, ha, ha!

[*Holding her Sides.*]

Gripe. Dear niece, come and take me down. [*To Har.*]

Live. How got you there? [*To Gripe.*]

Hunks. Take me out first. [*To Lively.*]

Live. What brought you there? [*To Hunks.*]

Har. Haste, my dear Lively, to relieve 'em.

Jenny. What, set 'em free without conditions? No, no, make terms first; bind 'em now, you'll never have 'em at such another hold.

Gripe. Niece, my dear niece, do but persuade your favourite gallant there to help me down, and I'll restore every shilling of your fortune.

Jenny. And give your consent to her marriage with him?

Gripe. Ay, with any body.

Jenny. So much for the gentleman above stairs; now what says the gentleman below.

Hunks. Any thing, any thing. I'll render up my trust.

Jenny. Make your nephew your whole and sole heir?

Hunks. Willingly.

Jenny. And you both swear to keep your words?

Gripe. *Hunks.* We swear.

Jenny. Never to go from your agreement?

Gripe. *Hunks.* Never.

Jenny. Or we deliver you over to the *cadi* for perjury.

Gripe. *Hunks.* And his *janizaries* shall carbonado us.

Liv. Enough. *Jenny*, there's a ladder; I'll raise it; and do you relieve one, while I attend the other.

Gripe. Pise on't, girls, don't be in such a hurry.—
[*Harriot and Jenny rear up the Ladder to Gripe; Lively goes to assist Hunks*] Pise on it! Girls, make haste—I'm in such a tremor—the *cadi*—— [Scrambles down.]

Hunks. Quick, quick, dear lad—up with it! I'll help—— [To *Lively*.]

[*The Grate is raised; and Hunks, stepping forth, claps it down again; he embraces Lively in transport.*]

Gripe. [Pushes down the Ladder, and comes forward] Lord be praised, I'm once more on *terra firma*!

Hunks. [Advances, capering for Joy] Huzza! I'm disentombed.—Ah, gossip! we who thought to have been so rich! [Shakes his Head at *Gripe*.]

FINALE.—HUNKS, GRIPE, HARRIOT, LIVELY, and JENNY.

Hunks. 'Tis past—now, gossip, let's count our gains,
We've had our labour for our pains.
If henceforth e'er be caught,
Gold-finding in a vault,
You may keep me there,
I vow and swear,

I'll own it my own fault. [To *Gripe*.

Gripe. 'Tis you, y' old devil in human shape!
Who beguil'd your gossip into this scrape!
Who his greedy hopes cajol'd,
Wi' your musti's heaps untold;
Your golden dreams
Of ingots, gems—

To hell you'd trot for gold. [To *Hunks*.

Hunks. My love of gold I for ever renounce.

Gripe. And my avarice I lay aside at once.

Hunks. } To my { nephew I } restore,
Gripe. } { To my { niece I now }

Hunks. } My love, } and give my ore.
Gripe. } Her own, }

Hunks. } My mind's at rest.

Gripe. } While they are blest,
We never can be poor.

With duteous gratitude thus I bend. [Kneels.

Live. } In the parent happy to find a friend.

Har. } To shield you from annoy
Shall be our sole employ.

Gripe. } Content.

Hunks. } Of this event,
Jenny. } Genteels, I wish you joy.

Hunks. } But there's one treasure, whereof we still

Gripe. } Must misers be, which is—

All. } Your good will.

[To the Audience, with a low Bow.

Har. } Such welcome guests to bring,
Live. } We'll strain both voice and string.
Jenny. }

All. With a twinkum, twankum,
We will thank 'em,
Twinkum, twankum, twing.

Chorus. Such welcome guests to bring,
We'll strain both voice and string,
With a twinkum, twankum,
We will thank 'em,
Twinkum, twankum, twing.

[*Exeunt.*]

The following AIRS are omitted in the Representation.

AIR.—JENNY.

Haste, let us fly from a land of oppression,
Where beauty is led like a pig in a string;
A heart that's divided, to share in succession,
My mind (too exalted) I never can bring.
A bird in hand's an old expression,
That two in the bush is not one in possession;
We'll bring the proud infidels to a confession,
That women have souls as well as the men.

Quick then away to an island of pleasure,
Where each happy female may do as they please,
Where liberty's reckon'd the choicest of treasure;
Then fly, and the kind opportunity seize.
The bird in hand's an old expression,
That two in the bush is not one in possession;
We'll bring the proud infidels to a confession,
That women have souls as well as the men.

AIR.—GRIPE.

If the proverb has truly asserted,
That "a fool and his cash soon are parted,"
Like truth in the contrary lies;
That who has it, and keeps it, is wise.
Fools are spouts, whence the rich torrent rushes;
We, the cisterns, to save all that gushes,
And prevent it from running to waste.
While the ninnies
Are melting their guineas,
Some lurking regret still within is;
But we, without a sigh,
Pick up, what they let fly;
Their envy we, and they our jest.

DUET.—HARRIOT and LIVELY.

Live. Fortune no more malicious,
Love to our vows propitious,
Wait but to crown our wishes,
In Europe till we land.

Here knavish uncles spite us,
Thither gay hopes invite us;
Hymen will there unite us,
In his delightful band.

Har. Fortune no more, &c.

Live. Here knavish uncles, &c.

Har. Steady still, will you love me—oh?
Steady, steady.

Live. Steady to death I'll prove—yea.
Steady, steady.

Har. Steady wilt thou, &c.

Live. Steady to death, &c.

Har. O then, blest and blessing—

Live. Caress'd, caressing—
Possess'd, possessing.
No uncles to withstand.

Har. Our hearts we may expand.

Both. Oh then, bless'd, &c.

AIR.—HARRIOT.

Sure you have lost your senses!
Look down—the depth immense is;
No bottom can I see.
Bless us! how could you think of it,
He shan't approach the brink of it;
But in to plunge! What ho?
Oh, no, I'll never agree.

VENICE PRESERVED:

OR,

A PLOT DISCOVERED.

A Tragedy.

BY THOMAS OTWAY.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

Author of several Dramatic Pieces: and

PROMPTER OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.



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1814.



VENICE PRESERVED,

FIRST acted in Lincoln's-inn Fields, in 1682, is founded on an historical fact detailed in the Abbé St. Real's History of the Marquis Bedamar's Spanish Conspiracy at Venice.

In this edition we wholly omit the character of Antonio, which was introduced to stigmatize the vices of a senator now deservedly forgotten; the picture drawn of his disgusting follies was by no means calculated either to improve or amuse: many other passages which bordered too much on grossiereté are also left out.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

As originally performed.

<i>Duke of Venice</i>	Mr. D. Williams.
<i>Priuli</i>	Mr. Bowman.
<i>Antonio</i>	Mr. Leigh.
<i>Bedamar</i>	Mr. Gillow.
<i>Jaffier</i>	Mr. Betterton.
<i>Pierre</i>	Mr. Smith.
<i>Renault</i>	Mr. Wiltshire.
<i>Spinosa</i>	Mr. Perceval.
<i>Belvidera</i>	Mrs. Barry.
<i>Aquilina</i>	Mrs. Curren.

1814.

<i>Drury Lane.</i>		<i>Covent Garden.</i>
<i>Duke of Venice</i>	Mr. Carr.	Mr. Creswell.
<i>Priuli</i>	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Egerton.
<i>Antonio</i>	[Omitted.]	[Omitted.]
<i>Bedamar</i>	Mr. J. Wallack.	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Jaffier</i>	Mr. Rao.	Mr. Conway.
<i>Pierre</i>	Mr. Elliston.	Mr. Young.
<i>Renault</i>	Mr. R. Phillips.	Mr. Chapman.
<i>Elliott</i>	Mr. Waldegrave.	Mr. Hamerton.
<i>Spinosa</i>	Mr. Elrington.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Theodore</i>	Mr. J. West.	Mr. King.
<i>Durand</i>	Mr. Wallack.	Mr. Grant.
<i>Mezzana</i>	Mr. Buxton.	Mr. Norris.
<i>Officers</i>	Messrs. Ray and Cooke.	Messrs. Jeffrey and Tooley.
<i>Belvidera</i>	Miss Smith.	Mrs. Macgibbon.
<i>Aquilina</i>	[Omitted.]	[Omitted.]

Officers, Guards, Executioner, &c.

ACT THE FIRST.



SCENE I. *A Street in VENICE.*

Enter PRIULI and JAFFIER.

Pri. No more! I'll hear no more! Be gone and leave me.

Jaf. Not hear me! By my suffering but you shall! My lord, my lord! I'm not that abject wretch You think me. Patience! where's the distance throws Me back so far, but I may boldly speak In right, though proud oppression will not hear me?

Pri. Have you not wrong'd me?

Jaf. Could my nature e'er Have brook'd injustice, or the doing wrongs, I need not now thus low have bent myself To gain a hearing from a cruel father. Wrong'd you?

Pri. Yes, wrong'd me! In the nicest point, The honour of my house, you've done me wrong. You may remember (for I now will speak, And urge its baseness) when you first came home

From travel, with such hopes as made you look'd on,
By all men's eyes, a youth of expectation;
Pleas'd with your growing virtue, I receiv'd you;
Court'd, and sought to raise you to your merits:
My house, my table, nay, my fortune too,
My very self was yours; you might have us'd me
To your best service; like an open friend
I treated, trusted you, and thought ~~you~~ mine:
When, in requital of my best endeavours,
You treacherously practis'd to undo me;
Seduc'd the weakness of my age's darling,
My only child, and stole her from my bosom.
Oh Belvidera!

Jaf. 'Tis to me you owe her:
Childless you had been else, and in the grave
Your name extinct; no more Priuli heard of.
You may remember, scarce five years are past,
Since in your brigantine you sail'd to see
The Adriatic wedded by our duke;
And I was with you: your unskilful pilot
Dash'd us upon a rock; when to your boat
You made for safety: enter'd first yourself;
Th' affrighted Belvidera following next,
As she stood trembling on the vessel's side,
Was, by a wave, wash'd off into the deep;
When instantly I plung'd into the sea,
And buffeting the billows to her rescue,
Redeem'd her life with half the loss of mine.
Like a rich conquest, in one hand I bore her,
And with the other dash'd the saucy waves,
That throng'd and press'd to rob me of my prize.
I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms:
Indeed you thank'd me; but a nobler gratitude
Rose in her soul: for from that hour she lov'd me,
Till for her life she paid me with herself.

Pri. You stole her from me; like a thief you stole
her,
At dead of night! that curs'd hour you chose
To rifle me of all my heart held dear.
May all your joys in her prove false, like mine;

A sterile fortune, and a barren bed,
Attend you both; continual discord make
Your days and nights bitter and grievous; still
May the hard hand of a vexatious need
Oppress and grind you; till at last you find
The curse of disobedience all your portion.

Jaf. Half of your curse you have bestow'd in vain:
Heav'n has already crown'd our faithful loves
With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty:
May he live to prove more gentle than his grandsire,
And happier than his father.

Pri. Rather live
To bait thee for his bread, and din your ears
With hungry cries; whilst his unhappy mother
Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.

Jaf. You talk as if 'twould please you.

Pri. 'Twould, by heav'n!

Jaf. Would I were in my grave!

Pri. And she too with thee:
For, living here, you're but my curst remembrancers.
I once was happy.

Jaf. You use me thus, because you know my soul
Is fond of Belvidera. You perceive
My life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me.
Oh! could my soul ever have known satiety;
Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me
But I might send her back to you with contumely,
And court my fortune where she would be kinder?

Pri. You dare not do't.

Jaf. Indeed, my lord, I dare not.
My heart, that awes me, is too much my master:
Three years are past, since first our vows were plighted,
During which time, the world must bear me witness,
I've treated Belvidera like your daughter,
The daughter of a senator of Venice:
Distinction, place, attendance, and observance,
Due to her birth, she always has commanded.
Out of my little fortune I've done this;
Because (though hopeless e'er to win your nature)

The world might see I lov'd her for herself;
Not as the heirless of the great Priuli.

Pri. No more.

Jaf. Yes, all, and then adieu for ever.

There's not a wretch, that lives on common charity,
But's happier than me: for I have known
The luscious sweets of plenty; every night
Have slept with soft content about my head,
And never wak'd, but to a joyful morning;
Yet now must fall, like a full ear of corn,
Whose blossom 'scap'd, yet's wither'd in the ripening.

Pri. Home, and be humble; study to retrench;
Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,
Those pageants of thy folly:
Reduce the glitt'ring trappings of thy wife
To humble weeds, fit for thy little state:
Then, to some suburb cottage both retire;
Drudge to feed loathsome life; get brats and starve—
Home, home, I say.— [Exit.

Jaf. Yes, if my heart would let me—
This proud, this swelling heart: home I would go,
But that my doors are baleful to my eyes,
Fill'd and dam'd up with gaping creditors,
Watchful as fowlers when their game will spring.
I've now not fifty ducats in the world,
Yet still I am in love, and pleas'd with ruin.
Oh! Belvidera! Oh! she is my wife—
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.

Enter PIERRE.

Pier My friend, good morrow,
How fares the honest partner of my heart?
What, melancholy! not a word to spare me?

Jaf. I'm thinking, Pierre, how that damn'd starving
quality,
Call'd honesty, got footing in the world.

Pier. Why, powerful villany first set it up,
For its own ease and safety. Honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves

Repose and fatten. Were all mankind villains,
They'd starve each other; lawyers would want practice,
Cut-throats rewards: each man would kill his brother
Himself; none would be paid or hang'd for murder.
Honesty! 'twas a cheat invented first
To bind the hands of bold deserving rogues,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontrol'd above their betters.

Jaf. Then honesty is but a notion?

Pier. Nothing else;

Like wit, much talk'd of, not to be defin'd:
He that pretends to most, too, has least share in't.
'Tis a ragged virtue: Honesty! no more on't.

Jaf. Sure thou art honest!

Pier. So, indeed, men think me;

But they're mistaken, Jaffier: I'm a rogue
As well as they;

A fine, gay, bold-fac'd villain as thou seest me.

'Tis true, I pay my debts, when they're contracted;
I steal from no man; would not cut a throat
To gain admission to a great man's purse,
Or a whore's bed; I'd not betray my friend
To get his place or fortune; I scorn to flatter
A blown-up fool above me, or crush the wretch beneath
me;

Yet, Jaffier, for all this I'm a villain.

Jaf. A villain!

Pier. Yes, a most notorious villain;

To see the sufferings of my fellow creatures,
And own myself a man: to see our senators
Cheat the deluded people with a show
Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of.
They say, by them our hands are free from fetters;
Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds;
Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow;
Drive us, like wrecks, down the rough tide of power,
Whilst no hold's left to save us from destruction.
All that bear this are villains, and I one,
Not to rouse up at the great call of nature,

And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,
'That make us slaves, and tell us, 'tis our charter.

Jaf. I think no safety can be here for virtue,
And grieve, my friend, as much as thou, to live
In such a wretched state as this of Venice,
Where all agree to spoil the public good;
And villains fatten with the brave man's labours.

Pier. We've neither safety, unity, nor peace,
For the foundation's lost of common good;
Justice is lame, as well as blind, amongst us;
The laws (corrupted to their ends that make 'em)
Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,
That every day starts up, t' enslave us deeper.
Now could this glorious cause but find out friends
To do it right, oh, Jaffier! then might'st thou
Not wear these seals of woe upon thy face;
The proud Priuli should be taught humanity,
And learn to value such a son as thou art.
I dare not speak, but my heart bleeds this moment.

Jaf. Curs'd be the cause, though I thy friend be part
on't:

Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,
For I am us'd to misery, and perhaps
May find a way to sweeten't to thy spirit.

Pier. Too soon 'twill reach thy knowledge—

Jaf. Then from thee
Let it proceed. There's virtue in thy friendship,
Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
Strengthen my constancy and welcome ruin.

Pier. Then thou art ruined!

Jaf. That I long since knew;
I and ill fortune have been long acquainted.

Pier. I pass'd this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains;
The sons of public rapine were destroying.
They told me, by the sentence of the law,
They had commission to seize all thy fortune:
Nay more, Priuli's cruel hand had sign'd it—
Here stood a ruffian with a horrid face,

Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,
Tumbled into a heap for public sale;
There was another, making villanous jests
At thy undoing: he had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient, most domestic ornaments,
Rich hangings intermix'd and wrought with gold;
The very bed, which on thy wedding-night
Receiv'd thee to the arms of Belvidera,
The scene of all thy joys, was violated
By the coarse hands of filthy dungeon villains,
And thrown amongst the common lumber.

Jaf. Now thank heaven—

Pier. Thank heaven! for what?

Jaf. That I'm not worth a ducat.

Pier. Curse thy dull stars, and the worse fate of
Venice,

Where brothers, friends, and fathers, all are false;
Where there's no truth, no trust; where innocence
Stoops under vile oppression, and vice lords it.
Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how at last
Thy beauteous Belvidera, like a wretch
That's doom'd to banishment, came weeping forth,
Shining through tears, like April suns in showers,
That labour to o'ercome the cloud that loads 'em;
Whilst two young virgins, on whose arms she lean'd,
Kindly look'd up, and at her grief grew sad,
As if they catch'd the sorrows that fell from her.
Ev'n the lewd rabble, that were gather'd round
To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her;
Govern'd their roaring throats, and grumbled pity.
I could have hugg'd the greasy rogues: they pleas'd
me.

Jaf. I thank thee for this story, from my soul;
Since now I know the worst that can befall me.
Ah, Pierre! I have a heart that could have borne
The roughest wrong my fortune could have done me;
But when I think what Belvidera feels,
The bitterness her tender spirit tastes of,
I own myself a coward: bear my weakness:
If throwing thus my arms about thy neck,

I play the boy, and blubber in thy bosom.

Oh! I shall drown thee with my sorrows.

Pier. Burn,

First, burn and level Venice to thy ruin.

What! starve, like beggars' brats, in frosty weather,

Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death!

Thou or thy cause shall never want assistance,

Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee:

Command my heart, thou'rt every way its master.

Jaf. No, there's a secret pride in bravely dying.

Pier. Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run mad;

X Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow:

Revenge, the attribute of gods; they stamp'd it,

With their great image, on our natures. Die!

Consider well the cause, that calls upon thee:

And, if thou'rt base enough, die then. Remember,

Thy Belvidera suffers; Belvidera!

Die—damn first—What! be decently interr'd

In a church-yard, and mingle thy brave dust

With stinking rogues, that rot in winding-sheets,

Surfeit-slain fools, the common dung o'th' soil!

Jaf. Oh!

Pier. Well said, out with't, swear a little—

Jaf. Swear! By sea and air; by earth, by heav'n, and
bell,

I will revenge my Belvidera's tears.

Hark thee, my friend—Priuli—is—a senator.

Pier. A dog.

Jaf. Agreed.

Pier. Shoot him.

Jaf. With all my heart.

No more; where shall we meet at night?

Pier. I'll tell thee;

On the Rialto, every night at twelve,

I take my evening's walk of meditation;

There we two will meet, and talk of precious

Mischief—

Jaf. Farewell.

Pier. At twelve.

Jaf. At any hour; my plagues

Will keep me waking.

[*Exit Pierre.*]

Tell me why, good heaven,

Thou mad'st me, what I am, with all the spirit,

Aspiring thoughts, and elegant desires,

That fill the happiest man? Ah, rather, why

Didst thou not form me sordid as my fate,

Base-minded, dull, and fit to carry burthens?

Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me?

Is this just dealing, nature?—Belvidera!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Poor Belvidera!

Bel. Lead me, lead me, my virgins,

To that kind voice. My lord, my love, my refuge!

Happy my eyes, when they behold thy face!

My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating

At sight of thee, and bound with sprightly joys.

Oh smile! as when our loves were in their spring,

And cheer my fainting soul.

Jaf. As when our loves

Were in their spring! Has then our fortune chang'd?

Art thou not Belvidera, still the same,

Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found thee?

If thou art alter'd, where shall I have harbour?

Where ease my loaded heart? Oh! where complain?

Bel. Does this appear like change, or love decaying,

When thus I throw myself into thy bosom,

With all the resolution of strong truth!

Beats not my heart, as 'twould alarm thine

To a new charge of bliss?—I joy more in thee,

Than did thy mother, when she hugg'd thee first,

And bless'd the gods for all her travail past.

Jaf. Can there in woman be such glorious faith?

Sure all ill stories of thy sex are false!

Oh woman! lovely woman! nature made thee

To temper man: we had been brutes without you!

Angels are painted fair to look like you:

There's in you all that we believe of heaven;

Amazing brightness, purity, and truth,

Eternal joy, and everlasting love.

Bel. If love be treasure, we'll be wondrous rich ;
I have so much, my heart will surely break with't :
Vows can't express it. 'When I would declare
How great's my joy, I'm dumb with the big thought ;
I swell, and sigh, and labour with my longing.
O! lead me to some desert wide and wild,
Barren as our misfortunes, where my soul
May have its vent, where I may tell aloud
To the high heavens, and ev'ry list'ning planet,
With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught ;
Where I may throw my eager arms about thee,
Give loose to love, with kisses kindling joy,
And let off all the fire that's in my heart.

Jaf. Oh, Belvidera! doubly I'm a beggar:
Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee.
Want, worldly want, that hungry, meagre fiend,
Is at my heels, and chases me in view.
Canst thou bear cold and hunger? Can these limbs,
Fram'd for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty?
When banish'd by our miseries abroad
(As suddenly we shall be) to seek out
In some far climate, where our names are strangers,
For charitable succour; wilt thou then,
When in a bed of straw we shrink together,
And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads;
Wilt thou then talk thus to me? Wilt thou then
Hush my cares thus, and shelter me with love?

Bel. Oh! I will love thee, even in madness love
thee;
Though my distracted senses should forsake me,
I'd find some intervals, when my poor heart
Should 'swage itself, and be let loose to thine.
Though the bare earth be all our resting-place,
Its roots our food, some clift our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thine head;
And, as thou sighing ly'st, and swell'd with sorrow,
Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest;
Then praise our God, and watch thee till the morning.

Jaf. Hear this, you heav'ns! and wonder how you
made her:

Reign, reign, ye monarchs that divide the world,
Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
Tranquillity and happiness like mine!
Like gaudy ships th' obsequious billows fall,
And rise again to lift you in your pride;
They wait but for a storm, and then devour you;
I, in my private bark already wreck'd,
Like a poor merchant driven to unknown land,
That had by chance pack'd up his choicest treasure
In one dear casket, and sav'd only that;
Since I must wander further on the shore,
Thus hug my little, but my precious store,
Resolv'd to scorn and trust my fate no more.

}
[Exeunt.]

ACT THE SECOND.



SCENE I. *The Rialto.*

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. I'm here; and thus, the shades of night around
me,

I look as if all hell were in my heart,
And I in hell. Nay surely 'tis so with me!—
For every step I tread, methinks some fiend
Knocks at my breast, and bids me not be quiet.
I've heard how desperate wretches, like myself,
Have wander'd out at this dead time of night,
To meet the foe of mankind in his walk.
Sure I'm so curs'd that, though of heaven forsaken,
No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
Hell, hell! why sleep'st thou?

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. Sure I've staid too long:
The clock has struck, and I may lose my proselyte.
Speak, who goes there?

Jaf. A dog, that comes to howl
At yonder moon. What's he that asks the question?

Pier. A friend to dogs, for they are honest creatures,
And ne'er betray their masters: never fawn
On any that they love not. Well met, friend:
Jaffier!

Jaf. The same.

Pier. Where's Belvidera?—

Jaf. For a day or two
I've lodg'd her privately, till I see farther
What fortune will do for me. Pr'ythee, friend,
If thou wouldst have me fit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of Belvidera—

Pier. Not of her!

Jaf. Oh, no!

Pier. Not name her! May be I wish her well.

Jaf. Whom well?

Pier. Thy wife; thy lovely Belvidera.
I hope a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done?

Jaf. Y' are merry, Pierre.

Pier. I am so:

Thou shalt smile too, and Belvidera smile:
We'll all rejoice. Here's something to buy pins;
Marriage is chargeable. *[Gives him a Purse.*

Jaf. I but half wish'd
To see the devil, and he's here already. Well!
What must this buy? Rebellion, murder, treason?
Tell me, which way I must be damn'd for this.

Pier. When last we parted, we'd no qualms like these,
But entertain'd each other's thoughts like men
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world
Reform'd since our last meeting? What new miracles
Have happen'd? Has Priuli's heart relented?
Can he be honest?

Jaf. Kind heav'n, let heavy curses
Gall his old age; cramps, aches, rack his bones,
And bitterest disquiet wring his heart.
Oh! let him live, till life become his burden:
Let him groan under't long, linger an age

In the worst agonies and pangs of death,
And find its ease but late.

Pier. Nay, couldst thou not

As well, my friend, have stretch'd the curse to all
The senate round, as to one single villain?

Jaf. But curses stick not: could I kill with cursing,
By heaven I know not thirty heads in Venice
Should not be blasted. Senators should rot
Like dogs on dunghills. Oh! for a curse
To kill with!

Pier. Daggers, daggers are much better.

Jaf. Ha!

Pier. Daggers.

Jaf. But where are they?

Pier. Oh! a thousand

May be dispos'd of, in honest hands, in Venice.

Jaf. Thou talk'st in clouds.

Pier. But yet a heart, half wrong'd
As thine has been, would find the meaning, Jaffier.

Jaf. A thousand daggers, all in honest hands!
And have not I a friend will stick one here!

Pier. Yes, if I thought thou wert not cherish'd
To a nobler purpose, I would be thy friend;
But thou hast better friends; friends whom thy wrongs
Have made thy friends; friends worthy to be call'd so.
I'll trust thee with a secret: There are spirits
This hour at work.—But as thou art a man,
Whom I have pick'd and chosen from the world,
Swear that thou wilt be true to what I utter;
And when I've told thee that which only gods,
And men like gods, are privy to, then swear
No chance or change shall wrest it from thy bosom.

Jaf. When thou wouldst bind me, is there need of
oaths?

For thou'rt so near my heart, that thou may'st see
Its bottom, sound its strength and firmness to thee.
Is coward, fool, or villain in my face?
If I seem none of these, I dare believe
Thou wouldst not use me in a little cause,
For I am fit for honour's toughest task,

Nor ever yet found fooling was my province;
And for a villanous, inglorious enterprise,
I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
Before thee, set it to what point thou wilt.

Pier. Nay, 'tis a cause thou wilt be fond of, Jaffier;
For it is founded on the noblest basis;
Our liberties, our natural inheritance.
There's no religion, no hypocrisy in't;
We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray for't;
Openly act a deed the world shall gaze
With wonder at, and envy when 'tis done.

Jaf. For liberty!

Pier. For liberty, my friend.

Thou shalt be freed from base Priuli's tyranny,
And thy sequester'd fortunes heal'd again:
I shall be free from those opprobrious wrongs
That press me now, and bend my spirit downward;
All Venice free, and every growing merit
Succeed to its just right: fools shall be pull'd
From wisdom's seat: those baleful, unclean birds,
Those lazy owls, who, perch'd near fortune's top,
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledg'd virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious.

Jaf. What can I do?

Pier. Canst thou not kill a senator?

Jaf. Were there one wise or honest, I could kill him,
For herding with that nest of fools and knaves.
By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
Were to be had; and the brave story warms me.

Pier. Swear then!

Jaf. I do, by all those glittering stars,
And you great ruling planet of the night;
By all good pow'rs above, and ill below;
By love and friendship, dearer than my life,
No pow'r or death shall make me false to thee.

Pier. Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my heart.
A council's held hard by, where the destruction
Of this great empire's hatching: there I'll lead thee.
But be a man! for thou'rt to mix with men

Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when it's wildest——

Jaf. I give thee thanks
For this kind warning. Yes, I'll be a man;
And charge thee, Pierre, whene'er thou seest my fears
Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
Out of my breast, and show it for a coward's.
Come, let's be gone, for from this hour I chase
All little thoughts, all tender human follies
Out of my bosom: Vengeance shall have room:
Revenge!

Pier. And liberty!

Jaf. Revenge—revenge——

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. AQUILINA'S House.

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Why was my choice ambition? the worst ground
A wretch can build on! It's, indeed, at distance,
A goodly prospect, tempting to the view;
The height delights us, and the mountain top
Looks beautiful, because it's nigh to heav'n.
But we ne'er think how sandy's the foundation,
What storm will batter, and what tempest shake us.
Who's there?

Enter SPINOSA.

Spin. Renault, good morrow, for by this time
I think the scale of night has turn'd the balance,
And weighs up morning! Has the clock struck twelve?

Pen. Yes! clocks will go as they are set; but man,
Irregular man's ne'er constant, never certain:
I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness
In waiting dull attendance: 'tis the curse
Of diligent virtue to be mix'd, like mine,
With giddy tempers, souls but half resolv'd.

Spin. Hell seize that soul amongst us it can frighten.

Pen. What's then the cause that I am here alone?
Why are we not together?

Enter ELLIOTT.

O, sir, welcome!

You are an Englishman: when treason's hatching,
One might have thought you'd not have been behind-
hand.

In what whore's lap have you been lolling?
Give but an Englishman his whore and ease,
Beef, and a sea-coal fire, he's yours for ever.

Ell. Frenchman, you are saucy.

Ren. How!

*Enter BEDAMAR, the Ambassador; THEODORE, BRAM-
VEIL, DURAND, BRAVE, REVILLIDO, MEZZANA,
TERNON, and RETROSI, Conspirators.*

Bed. At difference; fie!

Is this a time for quarrels? Thieves and rogues
Fall out and brawl: should men of your high calling,
Men separated by the choice of Providence
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here
In this assembly as in one great jewel,
To adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smil'd on;
Should you, like boys, wrangle for trifles?

Ren. Boys!

Bed. Renault, thy hand.

Ren. I thought I'd given my heart
Long since to every man that mingles here;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my froward age its weakness.

Bed. Elliott, thou once hadst virtue. I have seen
Thy stubborn temper bent with godlike goodness,
Not half thus courted: 'Tis thy nation's glory
To hug the foe that offers brave alliance.
One more embrace, my friends—we'll all embrace.
United thus, we are the mighty engine
Must twist this rooted empire from its basis.
'Totters not it already?

Ell. Would 'twere tumbling.

Bed. Nay, it shall down; this night we seal its ruin.

Enter PIERRE.

Oh, Pierre, thou art welcome.

Come to my breast, for by its hopes thou look'st
Lovely dreadfull, and the fate of Venice
Seems on thy sword already. Oh, my Mars!
The poets that first feign'd a god of war,
Sure prophesied of thee.

Pier. Friend, was not Brutus
(I mean that Brutus, who in open senate
Stabb'd the first Cæsar that usurp'd the world),
A gallant man?

Ren. Yes, and Cataline too;
Though story wrong his fame: for he conspir'd
To prop the reeling glory of his country:
His cause was good.

Bed. And ours as much above it,
As, Renault, thou'rt superior to Cethegus,
Or Pierre to Cassius.

Pier. Then to what we aim at.
When do we start? or must we talk for ever?

Bed. No, Pierre, the deed's near birth; fate seems to
have set

The business up, and given it to our care;
I hope there's not a heart or hand amongst us,
But is firm and ready.

All. All.
We'll die with Bedamar.

Bed. O men
Matchless! as will your glory be hereafter:
The game is for a matchless prize, if won;
If lost, disgraceful ruin.

Pier. Ten thousand men are armed at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world:
This wretched state has starv'd them in its service;
And, by your bounty quicken'd, they're resolved
To serve your glory, and revenge their own:
They've all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for th' alarm, and grumble 'tis so tardy.

Bed. I doubt not, friend, but thy unwearied diligence

Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease;
After this night it is resolv'd we meet
No more, till Venice owns us for her lords.

Pier. How lovelily the Adriatic whore,
Dress'd in her flames, will shine! Devouring flames!
Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom,
And hiss in her foundation.

Bed. Now if any
Amongst us, that owns this glorious cause,
Have friends or interest he'd wish to save,
Let it be told: the general doom is seal'd;
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.

Pier. I must confess, you there have touch'd my weakness,
I have a friend; hear it! such a friend,
My heart was ne'er shut to him. Nay, I'll tell you:
He knows the very business of this hour;
But he rejoices in the cause, and loves it;
We've chang'd a vow to live and die together,
And he's at hand to ratify it here.

Ren. How! all betray'd!

Pier. No—I've nobly dealt with you;
I've brought my all into the public stock:
I've but one friend, and him I'll share amongst you:
Receive and cherish him; or if, when seen
And search'd, you find him worthless: as my tongue
Has lodg'd this secret in his faithful breast,
To ease your fears, I wear a dagger here
Shall rip it out again, and give you rest.
Come forth, thou only good I e'er could boast of.

Enter JAFFIER, with a Dagger.

Bed. His presence bears the show of manly virtue.

Jaf. I know you'll wonder all, that thus uncall'd,
I dare approach this place of fatal councils;
But I'm amongst you, and by heav'n it glads me
To see so many virtues thus united
To restore justice, and dethrone oppression.
Command this sword, if you would have it quiet,

Into this breast ; but, if you think it worthy
 To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,
 Send me into the ears'd assembled senate :
 It shrinks not, though I meet a father there.
 Would you behold this city flaming? here's
 A hand shall bear a lighted torch at noon
 To th' arsenal, and set its gates on fire.

Ren. You talk this well, sir.

Jaf. Nay—by heaven I'll do this.

Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces ;
 You fear me villain, and, indeed, it's odd
 To hear a stranger talk thus, at first meeting,
 Of matters that have been so well debated ;
 But I come ripe with wrongs, as you with councils.
 I hate this senate, am a foe to Venice ;
 A friend to none, but men resolv'd like me
 To push on mischief. Oh! did you but know me,
 I need not talk thus!

Bed. Pierre, I must embrace him.

My heart beats to this man, as if it knew him.

Ren. I never lov'd these huggers.

Jaf. Still I see

The cause delights ye not. Your friends survey me
 As I were dangerous—But I come arm'd
 Against all doubts, and to your trust will give
 A pledge, worth more than all the world can pay for.
 My Belvidera. Hwa; my Belvidera!

Bed. What wonder's next?

Jaf. Let me entreat you,

As I have henceforth hopes to call you friends,
 That all but the ambassador, and this
 Grave guide of councils, with my friend that owns me,
 Withdraw awhile, to spare a woman's blushes.

[*Exeunt all but Bedamar, Renault, Jaffier, and Pierre.*]

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bed. Pierre, whither will this ceremony lead us?

Jaf. My Belvidera! Belvidera!

Bel. Who,

Who calls so loud at this late peaceful hour?

'That voice was wont to come in gentle whispers,
And fill my ears with the soft breath of love.
'Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where art thou?

Jaf. Indeed 'tis late.

Bel. Alas! where am I? whither is't you lead me?
Methinks I read distraction in your face,
Something less gentle than the fate you tell me.
You shake and tremble too! your blood runs cold!
Heav'n's guard my love, and bless his heart with patience.

Jaf. That I have patience, let our fate bear witness,
Who has ordain'd it so, that thou and I
(Thou, the divinest good man e'er possess'd,
And I, the wretched'st of the race of man)
This very hour, without one tear, must part.

Bel. Part! must we part? Oh, am I then forsaken?
Why drag you from me? Whither are you going?
My dear! my life! my love!

Jaf. Oh, friends!

Bel. Speak to me.

Jaf. Take her from my heart,
She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
I charge thee take her, but with tender'st care
Relieve her troubles, and assuage her sorrows.

Ren. Rise, madam, and command amongst your servants.

Jaf. To you, sirs, and your honours, I bequeath her;
And with her this; when I prove unworthy—

[*Gives a Dagger.*]

You know the rest—Then strike it to her heart;
And tell her, he who three whole happy years
Lay in her arms, and each kind night repeated
The passionate vows of still increasing love,
Sent that reward for all her truth and sufferings.

Bel. Nay, take my life, since he has sold it cheaply.
O! thou unkind one;
Never meet more! have I deserv'd this from you;
Look on me, tell me, speak, thou fair deceiver.
Why am I separated from thy love?
If I am false, accuse me; but if true,
Don't, pr'ythee don't, in poverty forsake me,

But pity the sad heart that's torn with parting.

Yet hear me, yet recall me—

[*Exeunt Renault, Bedamar, and Belvidera.*]

Jaf. Oh! my eyes,

Look not that way, but turn yourselves awhile
Into my heart, and be wean'd altogether.

My friend where art thou?

Pier. Here, my honour's brother.

Jaf. Is Belvidera gone?

Pier. Renault has led her

Back to her own apartment; but, by heav'n,
Thou must not see her more, till our work's over.

Jaf. No!

Pier. Not for your life.

Jaf. Oh, Pierre, wert thou but she,
How I would pull thee down into my heart,
Gaze on thee, till my eye-strings crack'd with love;
Then, swelling, sighing, raging to be blest,
Come like a panting turtle to thy breast;
On thy soft bosom hovering, bill and play,
Confess the cause why last I fled away;
Own 'twas a fault, but swear to give it o'er,
And never follow false ambition more. [Exeunt.

ACT THE THIRD.



SCENE I. *A Chamber.*

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. I'm sacrific'd! I'm sold! betray'd to shame!
Inevitable ruin has enclos'd me!
He that should guard my virtue has betray'd it;
Left me! undone me! Oh, that I could hate him!
Where shall I go? Oh, whither, whither, wander?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. Can Belvidera want a resting-place,
When these poor arms are ready to receive her?
There was a time——

Bel. Yes, yes, there was a time,
When Belvidera's tears, her cries, and sorrows,
Were not despis'd; when, if she chanc'd to sigh,
Or look'd but sad—there was indeed a time,
When Jaffier would have ta'en her in his arms,
Kiss'd her declining head upon his breast,
And never left her till he found the cause.

Jaf. Oh, Portia, Portia! What a soul was thine!

Bel. That Portia was a woman; and when Brutus, Big with the fate of Rome, (heav'n guard thy safety!) Conceal'd from her the labours of his mind; She let him see her blood was great as his, Flow'd from a spring as noble, and a heart Fit to partake his troubles as his love. Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower, Thou gav'st last night in parting with me; strike it Here to my heart; and as the blood flows from it, Judge if it run not pure, as Cato's daughter's.

Jaf. Oh! Belvidera!

Bel. Why was I last night deliver'd to a villain?

Jaf. Ha! a villain?

Bel. Yes, to a villain! Why at such an hour Meets that assembly, all made up of wretches? Why, I in this hand, and in that a dagger, Was I deliver'd with such dreadful ceremonies? To you, sirs, and to your honours, I bequeath her, And with her this: Whene'er I prove unworthy— You know the rest—then strike it to her heart. Oh! why's that rest conceal'd from me? Must I Be made the hostage of a hellish trust? For such I know I am; that's all my value. But, by the love and loyalty I owe thee, I'll free thee from the bondage of the slaves; Straight to the senate, tell 'em all I know, All that I think, all that my fears inform me.

Jaf. Is this the Roman virtue; this the blood That boasts its purity with Cato's daughter? Would she have e'er betray'd her Brutus?

Bel. No:

For Brutus trusted her. Wert thou so kind, What would not Belvidera suffer for thee?

Jaf. I shall undo myself, and tell thee all. Yet think a little, ere thou tempt me further; Think I've a tale to tell will shake thy nature, Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of, Into vile tears and despicable sorrows: Then if thou shouldst betray me!—

Bel. Shall I swear!

Jaf. No, do not swear: I would not violate
Thy tender nature, with so rude a bond:
But as thou hop'st to see me live my days,
And love thee long, look this within thy breast:
I've bound myself, by all the strictest sacraments,
Divine and human——

Bel. Speak!

Jaf. To kill thy father——

Bel. My father!

Jaf. Nay, the throats of the whole senate
Shall bleed, my Belvidera. He, amongst us,
That spares his father, brother, or his friend,
Is damn'd.

Bel. Oh!

Jaf. Have a care, and shrink not even in thought:
For if thou dost——

Bel. I know it; thou wilt kill me.

Do, strike thy sword into this bosom: lay me
Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe.
Murder my father! though his cruel nature
Has persecuted me to my undoing;
Driven me to basest wants; can I behold him,
With smiles of vengeance, butcher'd in his age?
The sacred fountain of my life destroy'd?
And canst thou shed the blood that gave me being?
Nay, be a traitor too, and sell thy country?
Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
Mix with hir'd slaves, bravoos, and common stabbers,
Nose-slitters, alley-lurking villains! join
With such a crew, and take a ruffian's wages,
To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

Jaf. Thou wrong'st me, Belvidera! I've engaged
With men of souls; fit to reform the ills
Of all mankind: there's not a heart amongst them
But's stout as death, yet honest as the nature
Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were fashion.

Bel. What's he, to whose curst hands last night thou
gav'st me?

Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a story,

Would rouse thy lion heart out of its den,
And make it rage with terrifying fury.

Jaf. Speak on, I charge thee.

Bel. O my love! If e'er

Thy Belvidera's peace deserv'd thy care,
Remove me from this place. Last night, last night!

Jaf. Distract me not, but give me all the truth.

Bel. No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
Left in the pow'r of that old son of mischief;
No sooner was I lain on my sad bed,
But that vile wretch approach'd me, loose, unbutton'd,
Ready for violation: Then my heart
Throbb'd with its fears: Oh, how I wept and sigh'd,
And shrunk and trembled! wish'd in vain for him
That should protect me! Thou, alas! wert gone.

Jaf. Patience, sweet heav'n, 'till I make vengeance
sure. [him,

Bel. He drew the hideous dagger forth, thou gav'st
And with upbraiding smiles, he said, Behold it:
This is the pledge of a false husband's love:
And in my arms then press'd, and would have clasp'd me;
But with my cries, I scar'd his coward heart,
Till he withdrew, and mutter'd vows to hell.
These are thy friends! with these thy life, thy honour,
Thy love, all stak'd, and all will go to ruin.

Jaf. No more: I charge thee keep this secret close.
Clear up thy sorrows; look as if thy wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,
As no complaint were made. No more; retire,
Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honour;
I'll heal its failings, and deserve thy love.

Bel. Oh! should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
In anger leave me, and return no more.

Jaf. Return no more! I would not live without thee
Another night, to purchase the creation.

Bel. When shall we meet again?

Jaf. Anon, at twelve

I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms:
Come like a travell'd dove, and bring thee peace.

Bel. Indeed!

Jaf. By all our loves.

Bel. 'Tis hard to part :

But sure no falsehood ever look'd so fairly.

Farewell ; remember twelve.

[*Erit.*

Jaf. Let heav'n forget me,

When I remember not thy truth, thy love.

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. Jaffier.

Jaf. Who calls?

Pier. A friend, that could have wish'd

T' have found thee otherwise employed. What, hunt

A wife, on the dull soil ! Sure a staunch husband

Of all hounds is the dullest. Wilt thou never,

Never be wean'd from caudles and confections?

What feminine tales hast thou been list'ning to,

Of unair'd shirts, catarrhs and toothach, got

By thin-sol'd shoes? Damnation ! that a fellow,

Chosen to be a sharer in the destruction

Of a whole people, should sneak thus into corners

To ease his fulsome lusts, and fool his mind.

Jaf. May not a man then trifle out an hour

With a kind woman, and not wrong his calling?

Pier. Not in a cause like ours.

Jaf. Then, friend, our cause

Is in a damn'd condition : for I'll tell thee,

That cankerworm, call'd lechery, has touch'd it ;

'Tis tainted vilely. Wouldst thou think it? Renault

(That mortify'd, old, wither'd, winter rogue)

He visited her last night, like a kind guardian :

Faith ! she has some temptation, that's the truth on't.

Pier. He durst not wrong his trust.

Jaf. 'Twas something late, though,

To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.

Pier. Was she in bed?

Jaf. Yes, faith, in virgin sheets,

White as her bosom, Pierre, dish'd neatly up,

Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste.

Oh ! how the old fox stunk, I warrant thee,

When the rank fit was on him !

Pier. Patience guide me!
He's us'd no violence?

Jaf. No, no; out on't, violence!
Play'd with her neck; brush'd her with his grey beard;
But not a jot of violence.

Pier. Damn him.

Jaf. Ay, so say I: but hush, no more on't.
All hitherto is well, and I believe
Myself no monster yet: Sure it is near the hour
We all should meet for our concluding orders:
Will the ambassador be here in person?

Pier. No, he has sent commission to that villain,
Renault,
To give the executing charge:
I'd have thee be a man, if possible,
And keep thy temper; for a brave revenge
Ne'er comes too late.

Jaf. Fear not, I am cool as patience.

Pier. He's yender, coming this way through the
hall;
His thoughts seem full.

Jaf. Pr'ythee retire, and leave me
With him alone: I'll put him to some trial;
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.

Pier. Be careful, then.

[*Exit.*

Jaf. Nay, never doubt, but trust me.
What! be a devil, take a damning oath
For shedding native blood! Can there be a sin
In merciful repentance? Oh, this villain!

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Perverse and peevish: What a slave is man
To let his rebel passions master him!
Dispatch the tool her husband—that were well.
Who's there?

Jaf. A man.

Ren. My friend, my near ally,
The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge, is very
well.

Jaf. Sir, are you sure of that?

Stands she in perfect health? Beats her pulse even;
Neither too hot nor cold?

Ren. What means that question?

Jaf. Oh! women have fantastic constitutions,
Inconstant in their wishes, always wavering,
And never fix'd. Was it not boldly done,
Even at first sight, to trust the thing I lov'd
(A tempting treasure too) with youth so fierce
And vigorous as thine? but thou art honest.

Ren. Who dares accuse me?

Jaf. Curs'd be he that doubts
Thy virtue! I have try'd it, and declare,
Were I to choose a guardian of my honour,
I'd put it in thy keeping: for I know thee.

Ren. Know me!

Jaf. Ay, know thee. There's no falsehood in thee:
Thou look'st just as thou art. Let us embrace.
Now wouldst thou cut my throat, or I cut thine.

Ren. You dare not do't.

Jaf. You lie, sir.

Ren. How!

Jaf. No more,

'Tis a base world, and must reform, that's all.

*Enter SPINOSA, THEODORE, ELLIOTT, REVILLIDO,
DURAND, BROMVEIL, and the rest of the Conspirators.*

Ren. Spinosa! Theodore!

Spin. The same.

Ren. You are welcome.

Spin. You are trembling, sir.

Ren. 'Tis a cold night, indeed, and I am aged;
Full of decay and natural infirmities:

Re-enter PIERRE.

We shall be warm, my friends, I hope, to-morrow.

Pier. 'Twas not well done; thou shouldst have
strok'd him,
And not have gall'd him.

Jaf. Damn him, let him chew on't.
Heav'n! where am I? beset with cursed fiends,

That wait to damn me! What a devil's man,
When he forgets his nature—hush, my heart.

Ren. My friends, 'tis late; are we assembled all?
To-morrow's rising sun must see you all
Deck'd in your honours. Are the soldiers ready?

Pier. All, all.

Ren. You, Durand, with your thousand must possess
St. Mark's; you, captain, know your charge already,
'Tis to secure the ducal palace: You,
Be all this done with the least tumult possible,
'Till in each place you post sufficient guards:
Then sheathe your swords in every breast you meet.

Jaf. Oh! reverend cruelty! damn'd bloody villain!

Ren. During this execution, Durand, you
Must in the midst keep your battalia fast;
And, Theodore, be sure to plant the cannon
That may command the streets;
This done, we'll give the general alarm,
Apply petards, and force the ars'nal gates;
Then fire the city round in several places,
Or with our cannon (if it dare resist)
Batter to ruin. But above all I charge you,
Shed blood enough; spare neither sex nor age,
Name nor condition; if there live a senator
After to-morrow, though the dullest rogue
That e'er said nothing, we have lost our ends.
If possible, let's kill the very name
Of senator, and bury it in blood.

Jaf. Merciless, horrid slave—Ay, blood enough!
Shed blood enough, old Renault! how thou charm'st me!

Ren. But one thing more, and then farewell, till fate
Join us again, or separate us for ever.

First let's embrace. Heav'n knows who next shall thus
Wing ye together; but let's all remember,
We wear no common cause upon our swords:
Let each man think that on his single virtue
Depends the good and fame of all the rest;
Eternal honour, or perpetual infamy.
You droop, sir.

Jaf. No; with most profound attention

I've heard it all, and wonder at thy virtue.

Oh, Belvidera! take me to thy arms,

And show me where's my peace, for I have lost it. [*Erit.*]

Ren. Without the least remorse then, let's resolve
With fire and sword t' exterminate these tyrants;
Under whose weight this wretched country labours,
The means are only in our hands to crown them.

Pier. And may those pow'rs above that are propitious
To gallant minds, record this cause and bless it.

Ren. Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
Should there, my friends, be found among us one
False to this glorious enterprise, what fate,
What vengeance were enough for such a villain?

Ell. Death here without repentance, hell hereafter.

Ren. Let that be my lot, if as here I stand,
Listed by fate among her darling sons,
Though I had one only brother, dear by all
The strictest ties of nature; could I have such a friend
Join'd in this cause, and had but ground to fear
He meant foul play; may this right hand drop from me,
If I'd not hazard all my future peace,
And stab him to the heart before you. Who,
Who would do less? Wouldst thou not, Pierre, the
same?

Pier. You've singled me, sir, out for this hard question.
As if it were started only for my sake!

Am I the thing you fear? Here, here's my bosom,
Search it with all your swords. Am I a traitor?

Ren. No: but I fear your late commended friend
Is little less. Come, sirs, 'tis now no time
To trifle with our safety. Where's this Jaffier?

Spin. He left the room just now, in strange disorder.

Ren. Nay, there is danger in him: I observ'd him;
During the time I took for explanation,
He was transported from most deep attention
To a confusion which he could not smother,
His looks grew full of sadness and surprise,
All which betray'd a wavering spirit in him,
That labour'd with reluctancy and sorrow.
What's requisite for safety, must be done

With speedy execution; he remains
Yet in our power: I, for my own part, wear
A dagger——

Pier. Well.

Ren. And I could wish it——

Pier. Where?

Ren. Bafied in his heart.

Pier. Away; we're yet all friends,
No more of this, 'twill breed ill blood among us.

Spin. Let us all draw our swords, and search the house,
Pull him from the dark hole where he sits brooding
O'er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of him.

Pier. Who talks of killing? Who's he'll shed the blood
That's dear to me? is't you, or you, or you, sir?
What, not one speak! how you stand gaping all
On your grave oracle, your wooden god there!
Yet not a word! Then, sir, I'll tell you a secret;
Suspicion's but at best a coward's virtue. [*To Renault.*

Ren. A coward! [*Handles his Sword:*

Pier. Put up thy sword, old man;
Thy hand shakes at it. Come, let's heal this breach;
I am too hot, we yet may all live friends.

Spin. Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be so.

Pier. Again! Who's that?

Spin. 'Twas I.

Theo. And I.

Ren. And I.

Omnes. And all.

Ren. Who are on my side?

Spin. Every honest sword.

Let's die like men, and not be sold like slaves.

Pier. One such word more, by heav'n I'll to the senate,
And hang ye all, like dogs, in clusters.

Why weep your coward swords half out their sheaths?
Why do you not all brandish them like mine?
You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing.

Ren. Go to the senate, and betray us! haste!
Secure thy wretched life; we fear to die
Less than thou dar'st be honest.

Pier. That's rank falsehood.

Fear'st not thou death! Fie, there's a knavish itch
In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting.
Had Jaffier's wife prov'd kind, he'd still been true.
Faugh, how that stinks! thou die, thou kill my friend!
Or thou! or thou! with that lean wither'd face.
Away, disperse all to your several charges,
And meet to-morrow where your honour calls you.
I'll bring that man, whose blood you so much thirst for,
And you shall see him venture for you fairly—
Hence! hence, I say. *[Exit Renault, angrily.]*

Spin. I fear we've been to blame,
And done too much.

Theo. 'Twas too far urg'd against the man you lov'd.

Rev. Here, take our swords, and crush them with
your feet.

Spin. Forgive us, gallant friend.

Pier. Nay, now you've found
The way to melt, and cast me as you will.
Whence rose all this discord?

Oh, what a dangerous precipice have we 'scap'd!
How near a fall was all we'd long been building!
What an eternal blot had stain'd our glories,
If one, the bravest and the best of men,
Had fall'n a sacrifice to rash suspicion,
Butcher'd by those, whose cause he came to cherish!
Come but to-morrow, all your doubts shall end,
And to your loves, me better recommend,
That I've preserv'd your fame, and sav'd my friend. }

[Exeunt.]

ACT THE FOURTH.



SCENE I. *The Rialto.*

Enter JAFFIER and BELVIDERA.

Jaf. Where dost thou lead me? Every step I move,
Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb
Of a rack'd friend. Oh, my charming ruin!
Where are we wandering?

Bel. To eternal honour,
To do a deed shall chronicle thy name
Among the glorious legends of those few
That have sav'd sinking nations. Thy renown
Shall be the future song of all the virgins,
Who by thy piety have been preserv'd
From horrid violation. Every street
Shall be adorn'd with statues to thy honour;
And at thy feet this great inscription written,
Remember him that propp'd the fall of Venice.

Jaf. Rather, remember him, who, after all
The sacred bonds of oaths, and holier friendship,
In fond compassion to a woman's tears,

Forgot his manhood, virtue, truth, and honour,
To sacrifice the bosom that reliev'd him.
Why wilt thou damn me?

Bel. Oh, inconstant man!

How will you promise; how will you deceive!
Do, return back, replace me in my bondage,
Tell all thy friends how dangerously thou lov'st me,
And let thy dagger do its bloody office.
Or if thou think'st it nobler, let me live,
Till I'm a victim to the hateful lust
Of that infernal devil.

Last night, my love!

Jaf. Name it not again:

It shows a beastly image to my fancy,
Will wake me into madness.

Destruction, swift destruction, fall on my coward head.

Bel. Delay no longer then, but to the senate,
And tell the dismal'st story ever utter'd:
Tell 'em what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
Have been prepar'd: how near's the fatal hour.
Save thy poor country, save the reverend blood
Of all its nobles, which to-morrow's dawn
Must else see shed.

Jaf. Oh! think what then may prove my lot:
By all heav'n's powers, prophetic truth dwells in thee;
For every word thou speak'st, strikes through my heart;
Just what thou'st made me, take me, Belvidera,
And lead me to the place where I'm to say
This bitter lesson; where I must betray
My truth, my virtue, constancy, and friends.
Must I betray my friend? Ah! take me quickly:
Secure me well before that thought's renew'd;
If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.

Bel. Hast thou a friend more dear than Belvidera?

Jaf. No; thou'rt my soul itself; wealth, friendship,
honour,

All present joys, and earnest of all future,
Are summ'd in thee.

Come, lead me forward, now, like a tame lamb
To sacrifice. Thus, in his fatal garlands

Deck'd fine and pleas'd, the wanton skips and plays,
 Trots by th' enticing, flatt'ring priestess' side,
 And much transported with its little pride,
 Forget's his dear companions of the plain;
 Till, by her bound, he's on the altar lain,
 Yet then too hardly bleats, such pleasure's in the pain. }

Enter Officer and six Guards.

Off. Stand! who goes there?

Bel. Friends.

Off. But what friends are you?

Bel. Friends to the senate, and the state of Venice.

Off. My orders are to seize on all I find
 At this late hour, and bring 'em to the council,
 Who are now sitting.

Jaf. Sir, you shall be obey'd.

Now the lot's cast, and, fate, do what thou wilt.

[Exit guarded.]

SCENE II.

*The Senate-house, where appear sitting the DUKE of
 VENICE, PRIULI, and other Senators.*

Duke. Antony, Priuli, senators of Venice,
 Speak, why are we assembled here this night?
 What have you to inform us of, concerns
 The state of Venice' honour, or its safety?

Pri. Could words express the story I've to tell you,
 Fathers, these tears were useless, these sad tears
 That fall from my old eyes; but there is cause
 We all should weep, tear off these purple robes,
 And wrap ourselves in sackcloth, sitting down
 On the sad earth, and cry aloud to heav'n:
 Heav'n knows, if yet there be an hour to come
 Ere Venice be no more.

All Sen. How!

Pri. Nay, we stand
 Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
 Within this city's form'd a dark conspiracy,
 To massacre us all, our wives and children,

Kindred and friends, our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes: nay, the hour too fix'd;
The swords, for aught I know, drawn e'en this moment,
And the wild waste begun. From unknown hands
I had this warning; but, if we are men,
Let's not be tamely butcher'd, but do something
That may inform the world, in after ages,
Our virtue was not ruin'd, though we were.

[A Noise without.

Room, room, make room for some prisoners—

Enter Officer and Guards.

Duke. Speak, there. What disturbance?

Offi. Two prisoners have the guards seiz'd in the street,

Who say, they come t' inform this reverend senate
About the present danger.

Enter JAFFIER and Officer.

All Sen. Give 'em entrance—Well, who are you?

Jaf. A villain,

Would every man, that hears me,
Would deal so honestly, and own his title.

Duke. 'Tis rumour'd, that a plot has been contriv'd
Against this state; and you've a share in't too.
If you are a villain, to redeem your honour
Unfold the truth, and be restor'd with mercy.

Jaf. Think not, that I to save my life came hither;
I know its value better; but in pity
To all those wretches whose unhappy dooms
Are fix'd and seal'd. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenanted foe of Venice:
But use me as my dealings may deserve,
And I may prove a friend.

Duke. The slave capitulates,
Give him the tortures.

Jaf. That you dare not do;
Your fear won't let you, not the longing itch
To hear a story which you dread the truth of:
Truth, which the fear of smart shall ne'er get from me.

Cowards are scar'd with threat'nings; boys are whipt
Into confessions: but a steady mind
Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.
Give him the tortures! Name but such a thing
Again, by heav'n I'll shut these lips for ever.
Not all your racks, your engines, or your wheels,
Shall force a groan away, that you may guess at.

Duke. Name your conditions.

Jaf. For myself full pardon,
Besides the lives of two-and-twenty friends,
Whose names are here enroll'd—Nay, let their crimes
Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths
And sacred promise of this reverend council,
That, in a full assembly of the senate
The thing I ask be ratify'd. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the secret of your danger.

Duke. Propose the oath.

Jaf. By all the hopes
Ye have of peace and happiness hereafter,
Swear.—Ye swear?

All Sen. We swear.

Jaf. And, as ye keep the oath,
May you, and your posterity be bless'd,
Or curs'd for ever.

All Sen. Else be curs'd for ever.

Jaf. Then here's the list, and with't the full dis-
close

Of all that threatens you. *[Delivers a Paper.]*
Now, fate, thou hast caught me.

Duke. Give order that all diligent search be made
To seize these men, their characters are public;
The paper intimates their rendezvous
To be at the house of a fam'd Grecian courtesan,
Call'd Aquilina; see that place secur'd.
You, Jaffier, must with patience bear till morning
To be our prisoner.

Jaf. Would the chains of death
Had bound me safe, ere I had known this minute.

Duke. Captain, withdraw your prisoner.

Jaf. Sir, if possible,

Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose
me;

Where I may doze out what I've left of life,
Forget myself, and this day's guilt and falsehood.
Cruel remembrance, how shall I appease thee?

[*Exit guarded.*]

Offi. [*Without*] More traitors; room, room, room,
make room, there.

Duke. How's this? guards!

Where are our guards? Shut up the gates, the treason's
Already at our doors.

Enter Officer.

Offi. My lords, more traitors,
Seiz'd in the very act of consultation;
Furnish'd with arms and instruments of mischief.
Bring in the prisoners.

*Enter PIERRE, RENAULT, THEODORE, ELLIOTT,
REVILLIDO, and other Conspirators, in Fetters.*

Pier. You, my lords, and fathers
(As you are pleas'd to call yourselves), of Venice;
If you sit here to guide the course of justice,
Why these disgraceful chains upon the limbs
That have so often labour'd in your service?
Are these the wreaths of triumph ye bestow
On those, that bring you conquest home, and honours?

Duke. Go on; you shall be heard, sir.

Ant. And be hang'd too, I hope.

Pier. Are these the trophies I've deserv'd for fighting
Your battles with confederated powers?
When winds and seas conspir'd to overthrow you;
And brought the fleets of Spain to your own harbours;
When you, great duke, shrunk trembling in your palace,
And saw your wife, the Adriatic, plough'd,
Like a lewd whore, by bolder prows than yours,
Stepp'd not I forth, and taught your loose Venetians
The task of honour, and the way to greatness?
Rais'd you from your capitulating fears
To stipulate the terms of su'd-for peace?

And this my recompense! if I'm a traitor,
Produce my charge; or show the wretch that's base
And brave enough to tell me I'm a traitor.

Duke. Know you one Jaffier? [*Conspirators murmur.*]

Pier. Yes, and know his virtue.

His justice, truth, his general worth, and sufferings
From a hard father, taught me first to love him.

Enter JAFFIER, guarded.

Duke. See him brought forth.

Pier. My friend too bound! nay then
Our fate has conquer'd us, and we must fall.
Why droops the man whose welfare's so much mine,
They're but one thing? These reverend tyrants, Jaffier,
Call us traitors. Art thou one, my brother?

Jaf. To thee, I am the falsest, veriest slave,
That e'er betray'd a generous, trusting friend,
And gave up honour to be sure of ruin.
All our fair hopes, which morning was t' have crown'd,
Has this curs'd tongue o'erthrown.

Pier. So, then all's over:
Venice has lost her freedom, I my life.
No more! Farewell!

Duke. Say; will you make confession
Of your vile deeds, and trust the senate's mercy?

Pier. Curs'd be your senate: curs'd your constitution:
The curse of growing factions and divisions,
Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,
And make the robes of government you wear
Hateful to you, as these base chains to me.

Duke. Pardon, or death?

Pier. Death! honourable death!

Ren. Death's the best thing we ask, or you can give,
No shameful bonds, but honourable death.

Duke. Break up the council. Captain, guard your
prisoners.

Jaffier, you're free, but these must wait for judgment.

[*Exeunt all the Senators.*]

Pier. Come, where's my dungeon? Lead me to my
straw:

It will not be the first time I've lodg'd hard
To do the senate service.

Jaf. Hold, one moment.

Pier. Who's he disputes the judgment of the senate?
Presumptuous rebel—on—

[Strikes Jaffier.]

Jaf. By heav'n, you stir not!

I must be heard; I must have leave to speak.
Thou hast disgrac'd me, Pierre, by a vile blow:
Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice?
But use me as thou wilt, thou canst not wrong me,
For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries:
Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy,
With pity and with charity behold me:
But as there dwells a godlike nature in thee,
Listen with mildness to my supplications.

Pier. What whining monk art thou? what holy cheat,
That wouldst encroach upon my credulous ears,
And canst't thus vilely? Hence! I know thee not:
Leave, hypocrite.

Jaf. Not know me, Pierre?

Pier. No, I know thee not! What art thou?

Jaf. Jaffier, thy friend, thy once lov'd, valu'd friend!
Though now deserv'dly scorn'd, and us'd most hardly.

Pier. Thou, Jaffier! thou, my once lov'd, valu'd friend!
By heav'n's thou liest; the man so call'd, my friend,
Was generous, honest, faithful, just, and valiant;
Noble in mind, and in his person lovely;
Dear to my eyes, and tender to my heart:
But thou, a wretched, base, false, worthless coward,
Poor, even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect;
All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee.
Pr'ythee avoid; nor longer cling thus round me,
Like something baneful, that my nature's chill'd at.

Jaf. I have not wrong'd thee, by these tears I have
not.

Pier. Hast thou not wrong'd me? Dar'st thou call
thyself
That once lov'd, valu'd friend of mine,
And swear thou hast not wrong'd me? Whence these
chains?

Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment?
Whence this dishonour, but from thee, thou false one?

Jaf. All's true; yet grant one thing, and I've done asking.

Pier. What's that?

Jaf. To take thy life, on such conditions
The counsel have propos'd: thou, and thy friends,
May yet live long, and to be better treated.

Pier. Life! ask my life! confess! record myself
A villain, for the privilege to breathe!
And carry up and down this cursed city,
A discontented and repining spirit,
Burthensome to itself, a few years longer;
To lose it, may be at last, in a lewd quarrel
For some new friend, treacherous and false as thou art!
No, this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,
When only men, like thee, are fit to live in't.

Jaf. By all that's just——

Pier. Swear by some other powers,
For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.

Jaf. Then, by that hell I merit, I'll not leave thee,
Till, to thyself, at least thou'rt reconcil'd,
However thy resentment deal with me.

Pier. Not leave me!

Jaf. No; thou shalt not force me from thee.
Use me reproachfully, and like a slave;
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs
On my poor head; I'll bear it all with patience
Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty:
Lie at thy feet, and kiss 'em, though they spurn me;
Till wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,
And raise me to thy arms, with dear forgiveness.

Pier. Art thou not——

Jaf. What?

Pier. A traitor?

Jaf. Yes.

Pier. A villain?

Jaf. Granted.

Pier. A coward, a most scandalous coward;

Spiritless, void of honour ; one who has sold
Thy everlasting fame, for shameless life?

Jaf. All, all and more, much more: my faults are
numberless.

Pier. And wouldst thou have me live on terms like
thine ;

Base, as thou art false——

Jaf. No ; 'tis to me that's granted :
The safety of thy life was all I aim'd at,
In recompense for faith and trust so broken.

Pier. I scorn it more, because preserv'd by thee ;
And, as when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy misfortunes, sought thee in thy miseries,
Reliev'd thy wants, and rais'd thee from the state
Of wretchedness, in which thy fate had plung'd thee,
To rank thee in my list of noble friends ;
All I receiv'd, in surety for thy truth,
Were unregarded oaths, and this, this dagger,
Giv'n with a worthless pledge, thou since hast stol'n :
So I restore it back to thee again ;
Swearing by all those pow'rs which thou hast violated,
Never, from this curs'd hour to hold communion,
Friendship, or interest, with thee, though our years
Were to exceed those limited the world.
Take it—farewell—for now I owe thee nothing.

Jaf. Say thou wilt live then.

Pier. For my life, dispose it
Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tir'd with.

Jaf. Oh, Pierre !

Pier. No more.

Jaf. My eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
But languish after thee, and ache with gazing.

Pier. Leave me—Nay, then thus, thus I throw thee
from me ;

And curses, great as is thy falsehood, catch thee. [*Exit.*

Jaf. Amen.

He's gone, my father, friend, preserver,
And here's the portion he has left me :

[*Holds the Dagger up.*

This dagger. Well remember'd! with this dagger,
I gave a solemn vow of dire importance;
Parted with this, and Belvidera together.
Have a care, mem'ry, drive that thought no further:
No, I'll esteem it as a friend's last legacy;
Treasure it up within this wretched bosom,
Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,
That when they meet, they start not from each other.
So now for thinking—A blow, call'd a traitor, villain,
Coward, dishonourable coward; fough!
Oh! for a long sound sleep, and so forget it.
Down, busy devil!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. Whither shall I fly?
Where hide me and my miseries together?
Where's now the Roman constancy I boasted?
Sunk into trembling fears and desperation,
Not daring to look up to that dear face
Which us'd to smile, ev'n on my faults; but, down,
Bending these miserable eyes on earth,
Must move in penance, and implore much mercy.

Jaf. Mercy! kind heav'n has surely endless stores,
Hoarded for thee, of blessings yet untasted:
Oh, Belvidera! I'm the wretched'st creature
E'er crawl'd on earth.

My friend too, Belvidera, that dear friend,
Who, next to thee, was all my health rejoice'd in,
Has us'd me like a slave, shamefully us'd me:
'Twould break thy pitying heart to hear the story.

Bel. What has he done?

Jaf. Before we parted,
Ere yet his guards had led him to his prison,
Full of severest sorrows for his sufferings,
With eyes o'erflowing, and a bleeding heart,
As at his feet I kneel'd and su'd for mercy,
With a reproachful hand he dash'd a blow:
He struck me, Belvidera! by heav'n, he struck me!
Buffetted, call'd me traitor, villain, coward.

Am I a coward? Am I a villain? Tell me:
Thou'rt the best judge, and mad'st me, if I am so!
Damnation! Coward!

Bel. Oh! forgive him, Jaffier;
And, if his sufferings wound thy heart already,
What will they do to-morrow?

Jaf. Ah!

Bel. To-morrow,
When thou shalt see him stretch'd in all the agonies
Of a tormenting and a shameful death;
His bleeding bowels, and his broken limbs,
Insulted o'er, by a vile, butchering villain;
What will thy heart do then? Oh! sure 'twill stream,
Like my eyes now.

Jaf. What means thy dreadful story?
Death, and to-morrow! Broken limbs and bowels!

Bel. The faithless senators, 'tis they've decreed it:
They say, according to our friends' request,
They shall have death, and not ignoble bondage:
Declare their promis'd mercy all has forfeited:
False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession,
Warrants are pass'd for public death to-morrow.

Jaf. Death! doom'd to die! condemn'd unheard!
unpleaded!

Bel. Nay, cruel'st racks and torments are preparing
To force confession from their dying pangs.
Oh! do not look so terribly upon me!
How your lips shake, and all your face disorder'd!
What means my love?

Jaf. Leave me, I charge thee, leave me—Strong
temptations
Wake in my heart.

Bel. For what?

Jaf. No more, but leave me.

Bel. Why?

Jaf. Oh! by heav'n, I love thee with that fondness,
I would not have thee stay a moment longer
Near these curs'd hands: Are they not cold upon thee?
[Pulls the Dagger half out of his Bosom, and
puts it back again.

Bel. No, everlasting comfort's in thy arms.
To lean thus on thy breast, is softer ease
Than downy pillows, deck'd with leaves of roses.

Jaf. Alas! thou think'st not of the thorns 'tis fill'd
with:

Fly, ere they gall thee. There's a lurking serpent,
Ready to leap and sting thee to the heart:
Art thou not terrified?

Bel. No.

Jaf. Call to mind
What thou hast done, and whither thou hast brought me.

Bel. Hah!

Jaf. Where's my friend? my friend, thou smiling mis-
chief!

Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late; thou shouldst have fled
When thy guilt first had cause; for dire revenge
Is up, and raging for my friend. He groans!
Hark, how he groans! his screams are in my ears
Already; see, they've fix'd him on the wheel,
And now they tear him—Murder! Perjur'd senate!
Murder—Oh!—Hark thee, traitress, thou hast done this!
Thanks to thy tears, and false persuading love.
How her eyes speak! Oh, thou bewitching creature!

[*Fumbling for his Dagger.*]

Madness can't hurt thee. Come, thou little trembler,
Creep even into my heart, and there lie safe:
'Tis thy own citadel—Hah—yet stand off.
Heav'n must have justice, and my broken vows
Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy.
I'll wink, and then 'tis done—

Bel. What means the lord
Of me, my life, and love? What's in thy bosom,
Thou grasp'st at so? Nay, why am I thus treated?

[*Draws the Dagger and offers to stab her.*]

Jaf. Know, *Belvidera*, when we parted last,
I gave this dagger with thee, as in trust,
To be thy portion if I e'er prov'd false.
On such condition, was my truth believ'd:
But now 'tis forfeited, and must be paid for.

[*Offers to stab her again.*]

Bel. Oh! Mercy!

[*Kneeling.*

Jaf. Nay, no struggling.

Bel. Now then, kill me.

[*Leaps on his Neck, and kisses him.*

Jaf. I am, I am a coward; witness heav'n,

Witness it, earth, and every being witness:

'Tis but one blow! yet by immortal love,

I cannot longer bear a thought to harm thee.

[*He throws away the Dagger and embraces her.*

The seal of Providence is sure upon thee:

And thou wert born for yet unheard-of wonders.

Oh! thou wert either born to save or damn me.

By all the power that's giv'n me o'er my soul,

By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles,

By the victorious love that still waits on thee,

Fly to thy cruel father, save my friend,

Or all our future quiet's lost for ever.

Fall at his feet, cling round his reverend knees,

Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears,

Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him,

Crush him in th' arms, torture him with thy softness;

Nor till thy prayers are granted, set him free,

But conquer him, as thou hast conquer'd me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.



SCENE I. *An Apartment in PRIULI's House.*

Enter PRIULI.

Pri. Why, cruel heav'n, have my unhappy days
Been lengthen'd to this sad one? Oh! dishonour
And deathless infamy is fallen upon me.
Was it my fault? Am I a traitor? No.
But then, my only child, my daughter wedded;
'There my best blood runs foul, and a disease
Incurable has seiz'd upon my memory.

Enter BELVIDERA, in a long mourning Veil.

Bel. He's there, my father, my inhuman father,
That for three years has left an only child
Expos'd to all the outrages of fate,
And cruel ruin!—oh——

Pri. What child of sorrow
Art thou, that comes wrapt in weeds of sadness,
And mov'st as if thy steps were tow'rds a grave?

Bel. A wretch who from the very top of happiness
Am fall'n into the lowest depths of misery,
And want your pitying hand to raise me up again.

Pri. What wouldst thou beg for?

Bel. Pity and forgiveness. [*Throws up her Veil.*]

By the kind, tender names of child and father,
Hear my complaints, and take me to your love.

Pri. My daughter!

Bel. Yes, your daughter.

Pri. Don't talk thus.

Bel. Yes, I must; and you must hear too.

I have a husband.

Pri. Damn him.

Bel. Oh! do not curse him;

He would not speak so hard a word towards you
On any terms, howe'er he deals with me.

Pri. Ha! what means my child?

Bel. Oh! my husband, my dear husband,
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,
To pierce the heart of your poor Belvidera.

Pri. Kill thee!

Bel. Yes, kill me. When he pass'd his faith
And covenant against your state and senate,
He gave me up a hostage for his truth:
With me a dagger and a dire commission,
Whene'er he fail'd, to plunge it through this bosom.
I learnt the danger, chose the hour of love
To attempt his heart, and bring it back to honour.
Great love prevail'd, and bless'd me with success!
He came, confess'd, betray'd his dearest friends
For promis'd mercy. Now they're doom'd to suffer.
Gall'd with remembrance of what then was sworn,
If they are lost, he vows to appease the gods
With his poor life, and make my blood th' atonement.

Pri. Heav'ns!

Bel. If I was ever then your care, now hear me;
Fly to the senate, save the promis'd lives.
Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.

Pri. Oh, my heart's comfort!

Bel. Will you not, my father?

Weep not, but answer me.

Pri. By heav'n I will.

Not one of them but what shall be immortal.
Canst thou forgive me all my follies past?

I'll henceforth be indeed a father ; never,
 Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,
 Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life,
 Dear as these eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee.
 Peace to thy heart. Farewell.

- *Bel.* Go and remember,
 'Tis Belvidera's life her father pleads for.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II. A Garden.

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. Final destruction seize on all the world.
 Bend down ye heav'ns, and shutting round this earth,
 Crush the vile globe into its first confusion!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. My life——

[*Meeting him.*]

Jaf. My plague——

[*Turning from her.*]

Bel. Nay, then I see my ruin.

If I must die!

Jaf. Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy fancy ;
 But answer me to what I shall demand,
 With a firm temper and unshaken spirit.

Bel. I will, when I've done weeping——

Jaf. Fie, no more on't——

How long is't since that miserable day
 We wedded first.

Bel. Oh! h h!

Jaf. Nay, keep in thy tears,
 Lest they unman me too.

Bel. Heav'n knows I cannot ;
 The words you utter sound so very sadly,
 The streams will follow——

Jaf. Come, I'll kiss 'em dry then.

Bel. But was't a miserable day?

Jaf. A curs'd one.

Bel. I thought it otherwise ; and you've often sworn,
 In the transporting hours of warmest love,
 When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn you
 bless'd it.

Jaf. 'Twas a rash oath.

Bel. Then why am I not curs'd too?

Jaf. No, Belvidera; by th' eternal truth,
I dote with too much fondness.

Bel. Still so kind?

Still then do you love me?

Jaf. Man ne'er was blest
Since the first pair met, as I have been.

Bel. Then sure you will not curse me?

Jaf. No, I'll bless thee.

I came on purpose, Belvidera, to bless thee.
'Tis now, I think, three years, we've liv'd together.

Bel. And may no fatal minute ever part us,
Till, reverend grown for age and love, we go
Down to one grave, as our last bed, together;
There sleep in peace, till an eternal morning.

Jaf. Did I not say, I came to bless thee?

Bel. You did.

Jaf. Then hear me, bounteous heav'n:
Pour down your blessings on this beauteous head,
Where everlasting sweets are always springing,
With a continual giving hand: let peace,
Honour, and safety, always hover round her;
Feed her with plenty; let her eyes ne'er see
A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning:
Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest,
Harmless as her own thoughts; and prop her virtue,
To bear the loss of one that too much lov'd;
And comfort her with patience in our parting.

Bel. How! Parting, parting!

Jaf. Yes, for ever parting;
I have sworn, Belvidera, by yon heav'n,
That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,
We part this hour for ever.

Bel. O! call back

Your cruel blessing; stay with me and curse me.

Jaf. Now hold, heart, or never.

Bel. By all the tender days we've liv'd together,
Pity my sad condition; speak, but speak.

Jaf. Oh! h h!

Bel. By these arms, that now cling round thy neck,
By these poor streaming eyes—

Jaf. Murder! unhold me:
By th' immortal destiny that doom'd me.

[*Draws the Dagger.*

To this curs'd minute, I'll not live one longer;
Resolve to let me go, or see me fall——

Hark, the dismal bell [Passing-bell tolls.

Tolls out for death! I must attend its call too;
For my poor friend, my dying Pierre, expects me:
He sent a message to require I'd see him
Before he died, and take his last forgiveness.
Farewell, for ever.

Bel. Leave thy dagger with me,
Bequeath me something—Not one kiss at parting?
Oh! my poor heart, when wilt thou break?

[*Going out, looks back at him.*

Jaf. Yet stay:
We have a child, as yet a tender infant:
Be a kind mother to him when I'm gone;
Breed him in virtue, and the paths of honour,
But never let him know his father's story;
I charge thee, guard him from the wrongs my fate
May do his future fortune, or his name.
Now—nearer yet— [Approaching each other.

Oh! that my arms were rivetted
Thus round thee ever! But my friend! my oath!
This and no more. [Kisses her.

Bel. Another, sure another,
For that poor little one you've ta'en such care of.
I'll giv't him truly.

Jaf. So now farewell.

Bel. For ever?

Jaf. Heav'n knows for ever; all good angels guard
thee. [Exit.

Bel. All ill ones sure had charge of me this moment.
Curs'd be my days, and doubly curs'd my nights.
Oh! give me daggers, fire, or water:
How I could bleed, how burn, how drown, the waves
Huzzing and booming round my sinking head,
Till I descended to the peaceful bottom!
Oh! there's all quiet, here all rage and fury:
The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain;

I long for thick, substantial sleep; Hell! hell!
Burst from the centre, rage and roar aloud,
If thou art half so hot, so mad as I am. [Exit.

SCENE III. *A Scaffold, and a Wheel prepared for
the Execution of PIERRE.*

*Enter Officer, PIERRE, Guards, Executioner, and
a great Rabble.*

Pier. My friend not come yet?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaf. Oh, Pierre!

Pier. Yet nearer.

Dear to my arms, though thou'st undone my fame,
I can't forget to love thee. Pr'ythee, Jaffier,
Forgive that filthy blow my passion dealt thee;
I'm now preparing for the land of peace,
And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men, like thee, to bless my journey.

Jaf. Good! I am the vilest creature, worse than e'er
Suffer'd the shameful fate thou'rt going to taste of.

Offi. The time grows short, your friends are dead
already.

Jaf. Dead!

Pier. Yes, dead, Jaffier; they've all died like men too,
Worthy their character.

Jaf. And what must I do?

Pier. Oh, Jaffier!

Jaf. Speak aloud thy burthen'd soul,
And tell thy troubles to thy tortur'd friend.

Pier. Friend! Couldst thou yet be a friend, a gene-
rous friend,

I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.
Heav'n knows, I want a friend.

Jaf. And I a kind one,
That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,
Or think, when he's to die, my thoughts are idle.

Pier. No! live, I charge thee, Jaffier.

Jaf. Yes, I will live:

But it shall be to see thy fall reveng'd
At such a rate, as Venice long shall groan for.

Pier. Wilt thou?

Jaf. I will, by heav'n.

Pier. Then still thou'rt noble,
And I forgive thee. Oh!—yet—shall I trust thee?

Jaf. No; I've been false already.

Pier. Dost thou love me?

Jaf. Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubtings.

Pier. Curse on this weakness. [Weeps.]

Jaf. Tears! Amazement! Tears!

I never saw thee melted thus before;
And know there's something labouring in thy bosom,
That must have vent: Though I'm a villain, tell me.

Pier. See'st thou that engine?

[Pointing to the Wheel.]

Jaf. Why?

Pier. Is't fit a soldier, who has liv'd with honour,
Fought nation's quarrels, and been crown'd with con-
quest,

Be expos'd a common carcass on a wheel?

Jaf. Hah!

Pier. Speak! is't fitting?

Jaf. Fitting!

Pier. Yes; is't fitting?

Jaf. What's to be done?

Pier. I'd have thee undertake

Something that's noble, to preserve my memory
From the disgrace that's ready to attain it.

Off. The day grows late, sir.

Pier. I'll make haste. Oh, Jaffier!

Though thou'st betray'd me, do me some way justice.

Jaf. No more of that: thy wishes shall be satisfied;
I have a wife, and she shall bleed: my child too,
Yield up his little throat, and all

To appease thee—— [Going away, Pierre holds him.]

Pier. No—this—no more. [Whispers Jaffier.]

Jaf. Hah! is't then so?

Pier. Most certainly.

Jaf. I'll do it.

Pier. Remember.

Offi. Sir.

Pier. Come, now I'm ready.

[*He and Jaffier ascend the Scaffold.*]

Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour;

Keep off the rabble, that I may have room

To entertain my fate, and die with decency.

Come. [*Takes off his Gown, Executioner prepares to bind him.*]

You'll think on't.

[*To Jaffier.*]

Jaf. 'Twen't grow stale before to-morrow.

Pier. Now, Jaffier! now I'm going. Now—

[*Executioner having bound him.*]

Jaf. Have at thee,

Thou honest heart, then—here—

[*Stabs him.*]

And this is well too.

[*Stabs himself.*]

Pier. Now thou hast indeed been faithful.

This was done nobly—We have deceiv'd the senate.

Jaf. Bravely.

Pier. Ha, ha, ha—oh! oh!

[*Dies.*]

Jaf. Now, ye curs'd rulers,

Thus of the blood y'ave shed, I make libation

And sprinkle it mingling. May it rest upon you,

And all your race. Be henceforth peace a stranger

Within your walls; let plagues and famine waste

Your generation—Oh, poor Belvidera!

Sir, I have a wife, bear this in safety to her,

A token that with my dying breath I bless'd her,

And the dear little infant left behind me.

I'm sick—I'm quiet. [*Dies. Scene shuts upon them.*]

SCENE IV. An Apartment at PRIULI'S.

Soft Music. Enter BELVIDERA, distracted, led by two of her Women; PRIULI and Servants.

Pri. Strengthen her heart with patience, pitying heav'n.

Bel. Come, come, come, come, come, nay, come to bed,

Pr'ythee, my love. The winds; hark how they whistle;

And the rain beats: Oh! how the weather shrinks me!
You are angry now, who cares? Pish, no indeed,
Choose then; I say you shall not go, you shall not;
Whip your ill nature; get you gone then. Oh!
Are you return'd? See, father, here he's come again:
Am I to blame to love him? O, thou dear one,
Why do you fly me? Are you angry still then?
Jaffier, where art thou? father, why do you do thus?
Stand off, don't hide him from me. He's here some-
where.

Stand off, I say: What gone? Remember't, tyrant:
I may revenge myself for this trick, one day.
I'll do't—I'll do't.

Enter Officer.

Pri. News, what news? [*Officer whispers Priuli.*]

Offi. Most sad, sir;

Jaffier, upon the scaffold, to prevent
A shameful death, stabb'd Pierre, and next himself;
Both fell together.

Pri. Daughter!

Bel. Ha! look there!

My husband bloody, and his friend too! Murder!
Who has done this? Speak to me, thou sad vision:
On these poor trembling knees I beg it. Vanish'd—
Here they went down—Oh, I'll dig, dig the deu up!
You shan't delude me thus. Hoa, Jaffier, Jaffier,
Peep up, and give me but a look. I have him!
I've got him, father: Oh!

My love! my dear! my blessing! help me! help me!
They have hold on me, and drag me to the bottom.
Nay—now they pull so hard—farewell—

[*Dies.* The Curtain falls slowly to Music.

THE
VIRGIN UNMASKED.

A Musical Farce.

BY HENRY FIELDING.

CORRECTLY GIVEN, FROM COPIES USED IN THE THEATRES,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

Author of several Dramatic Pieces, &c.



Printed at the Chiswick Press,

BY C. WHITTINGHAM;

**FOR SHERWOOD, NEELY, AND JONES, PATERNOSTER
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1817.



THE VIRGIN UNMASKED

Was originally produced at Drury Lane Theatre, in the year 1742, under the title of "THE OLD MAN TAUGHT WISDOM," and revived under its present title at the same house in 1782; it was at both periods well received, but has seldom been acted unless some votaress of the laughing muse occasioned its repetition for the display of her particular talents. In this point of view Mrs. Jordan often has assisted greatly to rescue this inconsistent, though pleasing, bagatelle from oblivion.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	1788.	
	<i>Drury Lane.</i>	<i>Covent Garden.</i>
<i>Goodwill</i>	Mr. Packer.	Mr. Thompson.
<i>Blister</i>	Mr. Suet.	Mr. Booth.
<i>Coupee</i>	Mr. Bannister, jun.	Mr. Brown.
<i>Quaver</i>	Mr. Barrymore.	Mr. Palmer.
<i>Thomas</i>	Mr. Phillimore.	Mr. Phillimore.
 <i>Lucy</i>	 Mrs. Jordan.	 Mrs. Brown.

THE VIRGIN UNMASKED.



SCENE I. *A Hall in GOODWILL's House.*

Enter GOODWILL.

Good. **W**ELL! it is to me surprising that out of the multitudes who feel a pleasure in getting an estate, few or none should taste a satisfaction in bestowing it. I am at present, I thank heaven and my own industry, worth a good ten thousand pounds and an only daughter, both which I have determined to give to the most worthy of my poor relations. I have sent to summon 'em. The girl I have bred up under my own eye; she has seen nothing, knows nothing, and has consequently no will but mine. Here she comes.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Did you send for me, papa?

Good. Yes; come hither, child. I have sent for you to mention an affair to you, which you, I believe, have not yet thought of.

Lucy. I hope it is not to send me to a boarding-school, papa.

Good. Be not frightened, my dear child, you have done nothing to offend me. But answer me one question. What does my little dear think of a husband?

Lucy. A husband, papa? O la!

Good. Come, it is a question a girl in her sixteenth year may answer. Should you like to have a husband, Lucy?

Lucy. And am I to have a coach?

Good. A coach! No, no: What has that to do with a husband?

Lucy. Why you know, papa, sir John Wealthy's daughter was carried away in a coach by her husband; and I have been told by several of our neighbours that I was to have a coach when I was married. Indeed I have dreamt of it a hundred times. I never dreamt of a husband in my whole life, that I did not dream of a coach. I have rid about in one all night in my sleep, and methought it was the purest thing in the world!

Good. Look up a girl as you will, I find you cannot keep her from evil counsellors. [*Aside*] I tell you, child, you must have no coach with a husband.

Lucy. Then let me have a coach without a husband.

Good. What! had you rather have a coach than a husband?

Lucy. Hum—I don't know that—But, if you'll get me a coach, let me alone, I'll warrant I'll get me a husband.

AIR.

Do you, papa, but find a coach,
And leave the other to me, sir;
For that will make the lover approach,
And I warrant we shan't disagree, sir.

No sparks will take to girls that walk,
I've heard it, and I confide in't:
Do you then fix my coach and six,
I warrant I'll get one to ride in't, to ride in't.
I warrant, &c.

Good. The girl is out of her wits sure. [*Aside*] Hussy! who put these thoughts into your head? You shall have a good sober husband, that will teach you better things.

Lucy. Ay, but I won't though, if I can help it; for miss Jenny Flant-it says, "A sober husband is the worst sort of husband in the world."

Good. I have a mind to sound the girl's inclinations. [*Aside*] Come hither, Lucy; tell me now, of all the men you ever saw, whom should you like best for a husband?

Lucy. O fie, papa! I must not tell.

Good. Yes, you may tell your father.

Lucy. No; miss Jenny says, "I must not tell my mind to any man whatever." She never tells a word of truth to her father.

Good. Miss Jenny is a wicked girl, and you must not regard her. Come, tell me the truth, or I shall be angry. Tell me, I insist upon it!

Lucy. Why then, of all the men I ever saw in my whole life time, I like Mr. Thomas, my lord Bounce's footman, the best, a hundred thousand times.

Good. O fie upon you! like a footman!

Lucy. A footman! he looks a thousand times more like a gentleman, than either squire Foxchase or squire Tankard, and talks more like one; ay, and smells more like one too; and he always carries a great swinging stick in his hand, as big as himself, that he would knock any dog down with who was to offer to bite me. A footman indeed! why, miss Jenny likes him as well as I do; and she says, "All the fine young gentlemen, that the ladies in London are so fond of, are just such persons as he is." Good, I should have had him before now, but that folks told me I should have a man with a coach, and that methinks I had rather have a great deal.

Good. I am amazed! but I abhor the mercenary temper in the girl worse than all. [*Aside*] What, child, would you have any one with a coach? Would you have Mr. Achum?

Lucy. Yes, indeed would I for a coach.

Good. Why, he is a cripple, and can scarce walk across the room.

Lucy. What signifies that?

AIR.

When he in a coach can be carried,
 What need has a man to go?
 That wōmen for coaches are married,
 I'm not such a child but I know.
 But if the poor crippled elf
 In coach be not able to roam,
 Why then I can go by myself,
 And he may e'en stay at home.

Enter BLISTER.

Blist. Mr. Goodwill, your humble servant. I have rode twelve long miles in little more than an hour. I am glad to see you so well; I was afraid by your message——

Good. That I had wanted your advice, I suppose; truly, coz, I sent for you on a better account. *Lucy,* this is a relation of yours you have not seen a great while; my cousin Blister, the apothecary.

[*Blister salutes her.*

Lucy. O la! I hope that great huge man is not to be my husband.

[*Aside.*

Blist. My cousin is well grown, and looks healthy. What apothecary do you employ? He deals in good drugs, I warrant him.

Good. Plain wholesome food and exercise are what she deals in.

Blist. Plain wholesome food is very proper at some time of the year.

Good. Leave us a little, my dear *Lucy,* I must talk with your cousin.

Lucy. Yes, papa, with all my heart. I hope I shall never see that great thing again.

[*Aside. Exit.*

Good. I believe you begin to wonder at my message, and will perhaps more when you know the occasion of it. In short, without more preface, I begin to find my

self going out of the world, and my daughter very eager to come into it. I have, therefore, resolved to see her settled without further delay. Wherefore, as I can give her a sufficient competency, I have determined to marry her to one of my own relations; and have sent to several of my kinsmen, of whom she shall take her choice; and as you are the first here, if you like my proposal, you shall make the first application.

Blist. With all my heart, cousin; and I am very much obliged to you. Your daughter seems an agreeable young woman, and I have no aversion to marriage. But pray, why do you think yourself going out of the world? Proper care might continue you in it a considerable while. Let me feel your pulse.

Good. To oblige you; though I am in very good health.

Blist. A little feverish. I would advise you to lose a little blood, and take an emulsion, with a gentle emetic and cathartic.

Good. No, no; I will send my daughter to you; but pray keep your physic to yourself, dear cousin. [*Exit.*]

Blist. This man is near seventy, and I have heard never took any physic in his life, and yet he looks as well as if he had been under the doctor's hands all his life-time. 'Tis strange; but if I marry his daughter, the sooner he dies the better. It is an odd whim of his to marry her in this manner; but he is very rich, and so, so much the better. What a strange girl it is! No matter, her fortune is never the worse. Oh, here comes my mistress.—

Enter Lucy.

What a plague shall I say to her? I never made love in my life. [*Aside.*]

Lucy. Papa has sent me hither; but if it was not for fear of a boarding-school, I am sure I would not have come; but they say I shall be whipt there, and a husband can't whip me let me do what I will; that's one good thing.

Blist. Won't you please to sit down, cousin?

Lucy. Yes, thank you, sir. Since I must stay with you, I may as well sit down as not. *[Aside.]*

Blist. Pray, cousin, how do you find yourself?

Lucy. Find myself! my papa finds me—

Blist. Yes; How do you do? Let me feel your pulse. How do you sleep o' nights?

Lucy. How? why sometimes one way, sometimes another.

Blist. But I mean, do you sleep without interruption? Are you not restless?

Lucy. I tumble and toss a good deal sometimes.

Blist. Hum! Pray how long do you usually sleep?

Lucy. About ten or eleven hours.

Blist. Is your stomach good? Do you eat with an appetite?

Lucy. No, I eat with a knife and fork.

Blist. How often do you find in a day any inclination to eat?

Lucy. Not often, unless it be at breakfast, dinner, and supper, and afternoon's nunccheon.

Blist. Hum! I find you have at present no absolute need of an apothecary.

Lucy. I am glad to hear that. I wish he was gone with all my heart. *[Aside.]*

Blist. I suppose, cousin, your father has mentioned to you the affair I am come upon; may I hope you will comply with him in making me the happiest man upon earth?

Lucy. You need not ask me, you know I must do what he bids me.

† *Blist.* May I then hope you will make me your husband?

Lucy. I must do what he'll have me.

Blist. What makes you cry, miss? Pray tell me what is the matter.

Lucy. No, you will be angry with me if I tell you.

Blist. I angry! it is not in my power, I can't be angry with you; I am to be afraid of your anger, not you of mine; I must not be angry with you whatever you do.

Lucy. What, must not you be angry, let me do what I will?

Blist. No, my dear.

Lucy. Why then, by goles! I will tell you.—I hate you, and I can't abide you. [*They rise.*]

Blist. What have I done to deserve your hate?

Lucy. You have done nothing; but you are such a great ugly thing, I can't bear to look at you; and if my papa was to look me up for a twelvemonth, I should hate you still.

Blist. Did you not tell me just now you would make me your husband?

Lucy. Yes, so I will for all that.

AIR.

Ah, be not angry, good dear sir,
Nor do not tell papa;
For though I can't abide you, sir,
I'll marry you—O la!

Blist. Well, my dear, if you can't abide me I can't help that, nor you can't help it; and if you will not tell your father, I assure you I will not; besides, my dear, as for liking me, do not give yourself any trouble about that, it is the very best reason for marrying me; no lady now marries any one but whom she hates; hating one another is the chief end of matrimony. It is what most couples do before they are married, and all after it. I fancy you have not a right notion of a married life. I suppose you imagine we are to be fond, and kiss, and hug one another as long as we live.

Lucy. Why, an't we?

Blist. Ha, ha, ha! an't we? no! How ignorant it is! [*Aside*] Marrying is nothing but living in the same house together, and going by the same name; while I am following my business, you will be following your pleasure; so that we shall rarely meet but at meals, and then we are to sit at opposite ends of the table, and make faces at each other.

Lucy. I shall like that prodigiously. Ah, but there is one thing though—an't we to sleep together?

Blist. A fortnight, no longer.

Lucy. A fortnight! that's a long time: but it will soon be over.

Blist. Ay, and then you may have any one else.

Lucy. May I? then I'll have Mr. Thomas, by goles! why this is pure; la! they told me other stories. I thought when I had been married I must have never liked any one but my husband, and that if I should he would kill me; but I thought one thing though with myself, that I could like another man without letting him know it, and then a fig for him.

Blist. Ay, ay, they tell children strange stories; I warrant they have told you, you must be governed by your husband.

Lucy. My papa tells me so.

Blist. But all the married women in England will tell you another story.

Lucy. So they have already; for they say I must not be governed by a husband; and they say another thing too, that you will tell me one story before marriage and another afterwards, for that marriage alters a man prodigiously.

Blist. No, child, I shall be just the same creature I am now, unless in one circumstance; I shall have a huge pair of horns on my head.

Lucy. Shall you? that's pure: ha, ha! what a comical figure you will make! But how will you make 'em grow?

Blist. It is you that will make 'em grow.

Lucy. Shall I? by goles! then I'll do't as soon as ever I can; for I long to see 'em! Do tell me how I shall do it.

Blist. Every other man you kiss, I shall have a pair of horns grow.

Lucy. By goles, then you shall have horns enow; but I fancy you are joking me now.

DUET.—BLISTER and LUCY.

Lucy. Ah, sir, I guess
You are a fibbing creature :

Blist. Because, dear miss,
You know not human nature.

Lucy. Married men, I'll be sworn,
I have seen without a horn.

Blist. Ah, child ! you want art to unlock it :
The secret here lies,
Men now are so wise,
They carry their horns in their pocket.

Lucy. But you shall wear yours on your head, for I shall like them better than any other thing about you.

Blist. Well then, miss, I may depend upon you.

Lucy. And may I depend upon you?

Blist. Yes, my dear.

Lucy. Ah, but don't call me so ; I hate you should call me so.

Blist. Oh, child, all married people call one another my dear, let 'em hate one another as much as they will.

Lucy. Do they? Well then, my dear—Hum ! I think there is not any great matter in the word neither.

Blist. Why, amongst your fine gentry there is scarce any meaning in any thing they say. Well, I'll go to your papa, and tell him we have agreed upon matters, and have the wedding instantly.

Lucy. The sooner the better.

Blist. Your servant, my pretty dear. [Exit.

Lucy. Your servant, my dear. Nasty, greasy, ugly fellow. Well, marriage is a charming thing though ; I long to be married more than ever I did for any thing in my life ; since I am to govern, I'll warrant I'll do it purely. By goles, I'll make him know who is at home. Let me see, I'll practise a little. Suppose that chair was my husband ; and, ecod ! by all I can find, a chair is as proper for a husband as any thing else ; now says my husband to me, " How do you do, my dear?" —" Lard, my dear, I don't know how I do ! not the

better for you."—"Pray, my dear, let us dine early to-day."—"Indeed, my dear, I can't."—"Do you intend to go abroad to-day?"—"No, my dear."—"Then you will stay at home."—"No, my dear."—"Shall we ride out?"—"No, my dear."—"Shall we go a visiting?"—"No, my dear." I will never do any thing I am bid, that I am resolved; and then Mr. Thomas, O good! I am out of my wits.

Enter COUPEE.

Heyday! what fine gentleman is this?

Coup. Cousin, your most obedient and devoted humble servant.

Lucy. I find this is one of your fine gentry, by his not having any meaning in his words. [*Aside.*]

Coup. I have not the honour to be known to you, cousin; but your father has been so kind as to give me admission to your fair hands.

Lucy. O gemini cancer! what a fine charming man this is!

Coup. My name, madam, is Coupee, and I have the honour to be a dancing-master.

Lucy. And are you come to teach me to dance?

Coup. Yes, my dear, I am come to teach you a very pretty dance. Did you never learn to dance?

Lucy. No, sir; not I, only Mr. Thomas taught me, one, two, three.

Coup. That is a very great fault in your education, and it will be a great happiness for you to amend it, by having a dancing-master for your husband.

Lucy. Yes, sir, but I am not to have a dancing-master: my papa says I am to have a nasty stinking apothecary.

Coup. Your papa says! What signifies what your papa says?

Lucy. What, must I not mind what my papa says?

Coup. No, no, you are to follow your own inclinations. I think if she has any eyes I may venture to trust 'em. [*Aside*] Your father is a very comical queer old fellow, a very odd kind of a silly fellow, and you

ought to laugh at him. I ask pardon though for my freedom.

Lucy. You need not ask my pardon, for I am not at all angry; for, between you and I, I think him as odd queer a fellow as you can do for your life. I hope you won't tell him what I say.

Coup. I tell him! I hate him for his barbarous usage of you; to lock up a young lady of beauty, wit, and spirit, without ever suffering her to learn to dance! Why, madam, not learning to dance is absolute ruin to a young lady. I suppose he took care enough you should learn to read.

Lucy. Yes, I can read very well, and write a letter too.

Coup. Ay, there it is; why now that's more than I can do. All parents take care to instruct their children in low mechanical things, while the genteel sciences are neglected. Forgive me, madam, at least, if I throw myself at your feet, and vow never to rise till lifted up with the elevated fire of your smiles.

Lucy. Lard, sir! I don't know what to say to these fine things. He's a pure man. [*Aside.*

Coup. Might I hope to obtain the least spark of your love, the least spark, madam, would blow up a flame in me that nothing ever could quench. O hide those lovely eyes, nor dart their fiery rays upon me, lest I am consumed. Shall I hope you will think on me?

Lucy. I shall think of you more than I will let you know. [*Aside.*

Coup. Will you not answer me?

Lucy. La! you make me blush so, I know not what to say.

Coup. Ay, that is from not having learnt to dance. A dancing-master would have cured her of that. Let me teach you what to say, that I may hope you will condescend to make me your husband.

Lucy. No, I won't say that; but—if you'll wait a fortnight——

Coup. A fortnight! bid me live to the age of —— of —— Mr. What's-his-name, the oldest man that ever lived.

Lucy. Mr. Methusalem.

Coup. Ay, you are right, Mr. Jerusalem! live a fortnight after you are married? No, unless you resolve to have me, I will resolve to put an end to myself.

Lucy. O do not do that; but indeed I never can have you: and the apothecary says, no woman marries any man she does not hate.

Coup. Ha, ha, ha! Such mean fellows as those every fine lady must hate; but when they marry fine gentlemen, they love them as long as they live.

Lucy. O but I would not have you think I love you. I assure you I don't love you; I have been told I must not tell any man I love him; I don't love you, indeed I don't.

Coup. But may I not hope you will?

Lucy. Lord, sir, I can't help what you hope; it is equal to me what you hope. Miss Jenny says I must always give myself airs to a man I like. [*Aside.*]

Coup. Hope, madam, at least, you may allow me; the cruellest of your sex the greatest tyrants deny not hope.

Lucy. No, I won't give you the least crumb of hope. Hope indeed! what do you take me for? I'll assure you! No, I would not give you the least bit of hope, though I was to see you die before my face. It is a pure thing to give one's self airs. [*Aside.*]

Coup. Since nothing but my death will content you, you shall be satisfied even at that price. [*Pulls out his Kitt*] Ha! cursed kitt! I have no other instrument of death about me than a sword, which won't draw. But I have thought of a way; within the orchard there is an apple-tree; there, there, madam! you shall see me hanging by the neck, dingle dangle.

There shall you see your dancing-master die;
As Bateman hang'd for love—e'en so will I.

Lucy. O stay! La, sir, you're so hasty: must I tell you the first time I see you: miss Jenny Plant-it has been courted these two years by half a dozen men, and nobody knows which she'll have yet, and must not

I be courted at all? I will be courted, indeed so I will.

Coup. And so you shall; I will court you after we are married.

Lucy. But will you indeed?

Coup. Yes, indeed; but if I should not, there are others enough that will.

Lucy. But I did not think married women had ever been courted though.

Coup. That's all owing to your not learning to dance! why there are abundance of women who marry for no other reason, as there are several men who never court any but married women.

Lucy. Well then I don't much care if I do marry you; but hold, there is one thing—but that does not much signify.

Coup. What is it, my dear?

Lucy. Only I promised the apothecary just now, that's all.

Coup. Well, shall I fly then, and put every thing in readiness?

Lucy. Ay do; I'm ready.

Coup. One kiss before I go, my dearest angel; and now one, two, three, and away. [*Exit dancing.*]

Lucy. Oh dear, sweet man! he's as handsome as an angel, and as fine as a lord: he is handsomer than Mr. Thomas, and, eood! almost as well drest. I see now why my father would never let me learn to dance. For, by goles! if all dancing-masters be such fine men as this, I wonder every woman does not dance away with one.

AIR.

Oh, how charming my life will be,
 When marriage has made me a fine lady!
 In chariot, six horses, and diamonds bright,
 In Flanders lace and 'broidery clothes,
 O how I'll flame it among the beaux!
 In bed all the day, at cards all the night,
 Oh how I'll revel the hours away!
 Sing it, and dance it, coquet it, and play;

With feasting, toasting, jesting, roasting,
 Rantum, scantum, flaunting, jaunting,
 Laughing at all the world can say.

O la! what's here? another beau!

Enter QUAVER.

Quav. Madam, your servant. I suppose my cousin Goodall has told you of the happiness he designs me.

Lucy. No, sir, my papa has not told me any thing about you. Who are you, pray?

Quav. I have the honour of being a distant relation of yours, and I hope to be a nearer one: my name is Quaver, madam; I have the honour to teach some of the first quality to sing.

Lucy. And are you come to teach me to sing?

Quav. I like her desire to learn to sing; it is a proof of an excellent understanding. [*Aside*] Yes, madam, I will be proud to teach you any thing in my power; and do believe I shall not yield to any one in the science of singing.

Lucy. Well, and I shall be glad to learn; for I have been told I have a tolerable voice, only I don't know the notes.

Quav. That, madam, may be acquired, a voice cannot: a voice must be the gift of nature, and it is the greatest gift nature can bestow. All other perfections, without a voice, are nothing at all. Music is allowed by all wise men to be the noblest of the sciences: whoever knows music, knows every thing.

Lucy. Come then, begin to teach me, for I long to learn.

Quav. But at present I have something of a different nature to say to you.

Lucy. What have you to say?

AIR.—QUAVER.

Dearest charmer!
 Will you then bid me tell,
 What you discern so well,

By my expiring sighs,
 My doating eyes,
 My doating eyes,
 Look through the instructive grove,
 Each object prompts to love ;
 All nature tells you what I'd say.

Lucy. O charming! delightful!

Quav. May I hope you'll grant——

Lucy. Now you shall hear my song.

AIR.

As I was a walking one morning in May,
 I heard a young damsel to sigh and to say,
 My true love has left me, 'twas but yesterday
 He took his leave of me, and so went away.

The very next time that I did him see,
 He vow'd to be constant, be constant to me ;
 I ask'd him his name, and he made this reply,
 It is T, I, M, O, T, H, Y.

Says he, if you'll wed me, pray tell me your mind,
 A husband I'll make you both loving and kind ;
 And now to the church, my dear, let us repair,
 Ne'er mind your F, A, T, H, E, R.

My father's possess'd of nine hundred a year,
 And I am his daughter and only heir.
 Not a farthing of fortune he'll give me, I fear,
 If I marry with Y, O, U, my dear.

They went to the church and were married, they say,
 And went to the father the very same day ;
 Saying, honoured father, we tell unto thee,
 That we're M, A, R, R, I, E, D.

With that the old codger began for to stare,
 You've married my daughter and only heir ;
 But since it is so, to it I comply,
 With T, I, M, O, T, H, Y.

Another song, and I'll do any thing.

AIR.—QUAVER.

Dearest creature!
Pride of nature!
All your glances
Give me trances.
Dearest, &c.

Quav. May I hope you'll be mine?

Lucy. Will you charm me so every day?

Quav. And every night too, my angel.

Re-enter COUPÉE.

Coup. Heyday! what do I see? my mistress in another man's arms? [*Aside*] Sir, will you do me the favour to tell me what business you have with that lady?

Quav. Pray, sir, be so good as to tell me what business you have to ask?

Coup. Sir!

Quav. Sir!

Coup. Sir, this lady is my mistress.

Quav. I beg to be excused for that, sir.

Coup. Sir!

Quav. Sir!

DUET.—COUPÉE and QUAVER.

Coup. Excuse me, sir; zounds! what d'ye mean?

I hope you don't give me the lie.

Quav. Sir, you mistake me quite and clean;

Indeed, good sir, not I.

Coup. Zounds, sir, if you had, I'd been mad,

But I'm very glad that you don't.

Quav. Do you challenge me, sir?

Coup. Not I, indeed, sir.

Quav. Indeed, sir, I'm very glad on't.

Lucy. Pray, gentlemen, what's the matter? I beseech you speak to me, one of you.

Coup. Have I not reason? Did I not find you in his arms?

Quav. And have I not reason? Did he not say you was his mistress to my face?

AIR.—LUCY.

Did mortal e'er see two such fools?
 For nothing they're going to fight;
 I begin to find men are but tools,
 And both with a whisper I'll bite.

With you I am ready to go, sir,
 I'll give t'other fool a rebuff; [To Coupee.

Stay you but a fortnight, or so, sir,
 I warrant I'll grant you enough. [To Quaver.

Quav. Damnation!

Coup. Hell and confusion!

[They draw. Lucy runs out.

Re-enter BLISTER.

Blist. For heaven's sake, gentlemen, what's the matter? I profess I am afraid you are both disordered. Pray, sir, give me leave to feel your pulse; I wish you are not light-headed.

Re-enter GOODWILL.

Good. Heyday! what, are you fencing here, gentlemen?

Blist. Fencing, quotha! they have almost fenced me out of my senses I am sure.

Coup. I shall take another time.

Quav. And so shall I.

Good. I hope there is no anger between you. You are nearer relations than you imagine to each other. Mr. Quaver, you was sent out of England young; and you, Mr. Coupee, have lived all your life-time in London; but I assure you, you are cousin-germans; let me introduce you to each other.

Quav. Dear cousin Coupee.

Blist. It's but a blow and a kiss with these sparks, I find.

Coup. I thought there was something about him I could not hurt.

Good. Here's another relation too, whom you do not know. This is Mr. Blister, son to your uncle Blister, the apothecary.

Coup. I hope you will excuse our ignorance.

Blist. Yes, cousin, with all my heart, since there is no harm come on't. But if you will take my advice, you shall both immediately lose some blood, and I will order each of you a little gentle physic.

Good. Gentlemen, I sent for you on a very particular affair. In short, I have resolved to dispose of my daughter to one of my relations; and if you should happen to be her choice—— [To Quaver.

Blist. That's impossible, for she has promised me already.

Coup. And me.

Quav. And me.

Good. Her own choice must determine; and if that falls on you, Mr. Blister, I must insist on your leaving off your trade and living here with me.

Blist. No, sir, I cannot consent to leaving off my trade.

Good. Pray, gentlemen, is not the request reasonable?

Quav. Coup. Oh, certainly, certainly.

Coup. Ten thousand pounds to an apothecary, indeed!

Quav. Not leave off his trade!

Coup. If I had been an apothecary, I believe I should not have made many words.

Good. I dare swear you will not, cousin, if she should make choice of you.

Coup. There is some difference though between us; mine is a genteel profession, and I shall not leave it off on any account.

Good. I'll be judged by Mr. Quaver here, who has been abroad and seen the world.

Quav. Very reasonable, very reasonable. This man, I see, has excellent sense, and can distinguish between arts and sciences.

Good. I am confident it would not be easy to prevail on you to continue the ridiculous art of teaching people to sing.

Quav. Ridiculous art of teaching to sing! Do you call music an art, which is the noblest of all sciences? I thought you a man of sense, but I find——

Coup. And I find too——

Blist. And so do I.—No man need be ashamed of marrying his daughter to a practitioner of physio. Without physicians, who would know when he was well?

Coup. If it was not for dancing-masters, men might as well walk upon their heads as their heels.

Quav. And if it was not for singing-masters, they might as well all have been born dumb.

Good. Ha! Confusion! What do I see? my daughter in the hands of that fellow.

Re-enter LUCY, with THOMAS.

Lucy. Pray, papa, give me your blessing: I hope you won't be angry with me, but I am married to Mr. Thomas.

Good. O Lucy, Lucy! is this the return you make to my fatherly fondness?

Lucy. Dear papa, forgive me, I won't do so any more. Indeed I should have been perjured if I had not had him. And I had not had him neither, but that he met me when I was frightened, and I did not know what I did.

Good. To marry a footman!

Tho. Why, look ye, sir, I am a footman, 'tis true, but I have good acquaintance in life, and when I have other clothes on, and money in my pocket, I trust that by my future conduct I shall not prove myself totally unworthy your regard.

Good. Ha! thou talk'st like a pretty sensible fellow; and I don't know whether my daughter has not made a better choice than she could have done among her booby relations; for I am now convinced 'tis less difficult to raise a fortune, than to find one worthy to inherit it.

FINALE.—BLISTER, COUPER, QUAVAR, and LUCY.

Blist. Had your daughter been physio'd well, sir, as she ought,
With bleeding and blister, emetic and draught,
This footman had never been once in her thought,
With his down, down, &c.

Coup. Had pretty miss been at a dancing-school bred,
Had her feet but been taught the right manner to tread,
I'm sure 'twould have put better things in her head,
Than his down, down, &c.

Quav. Had she learn'd, like fine ladies, instead of her
prayers,
To languish and die at Italian soft airs,
A footman had thus never tickled her ears,
With his down, down, &c.

Lucy. You may physio, and music, and dancing en-
hance,
In one I have got them all three by good chance ;
My doctor he'll be, and he'll teach me to dance,
With his down, down, &c.

Let not a poor farce, then, nice critics pursue,
But like honest-hearted good-natur'd men do,
And clap to please us, who have toil'd to please you,
With our down, down, &c.

Chorus. Let not a poor farce, then, &c.

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